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"Life just hasn't been the same around our fetid depths since Zlargh started redecorating the mail order catacombs. It's hard enough getting in eight hours solid whipping without decorators slopping ox blood everywhere. Zlargh's warped sense of humour knows no bounds, dressing up in tight fitting leotards isn't my idea of fun. Imagine the sight of Agaroth 'The Unwashed' prancing madly about screaming 'Flame On!', whilst trying desperately to ignite himself... Such is the effect of *Golden Heroes* on our mortifying master. I lept for joy on the news that ice was slowly spreading in our stagnant pits, only to discover the I.C.E. in question was the *Middle Earth Role-Playing Game*. Pity, hypothermia seems such a pleasant form of death... Our master's latest attempt at world domination has blossomed, nay spawned, into *The Black Sun*, an expanded newsletter laden with scenarios, reviews and letters, as well as the regular quiz. 'Man Things' injured whilst auto-duelling have the chance to reek glorious revenge in *Battlechairs,*, the *Black Sun's* expansion module for *Battlecars*. My suggestion of a 'torture tips' page was flatly refused, much to my annoyance. It appears Zlargh prefers some odious Man Thing called Ian Marsh to write about the game world instead – what does he know about suffering?"

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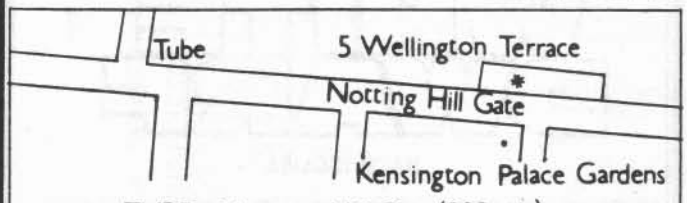

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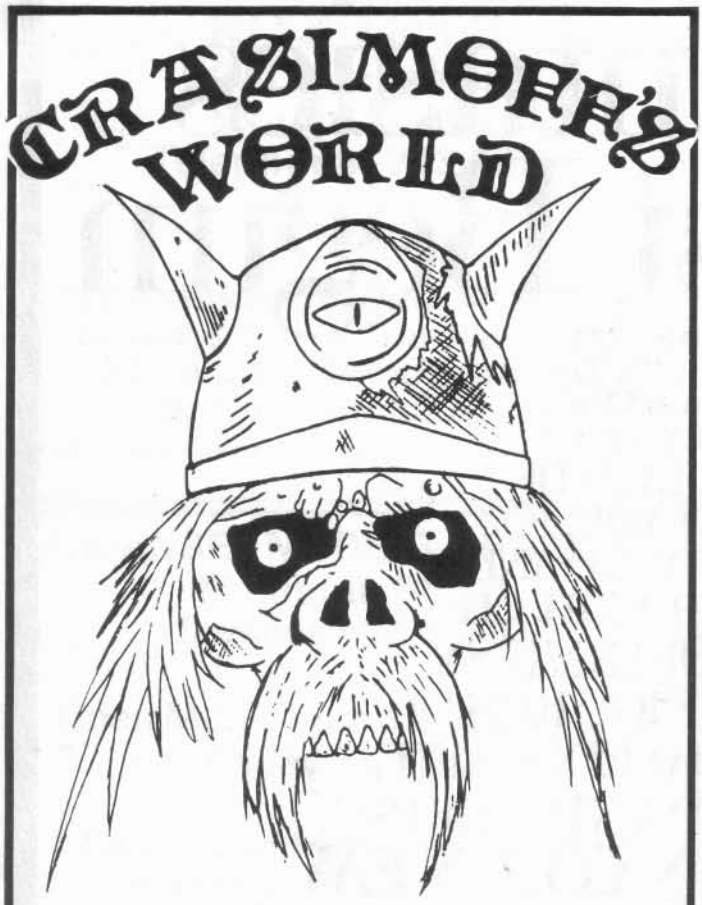

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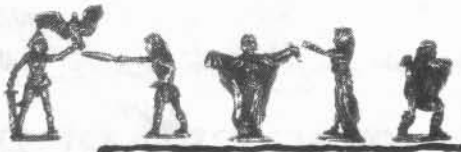

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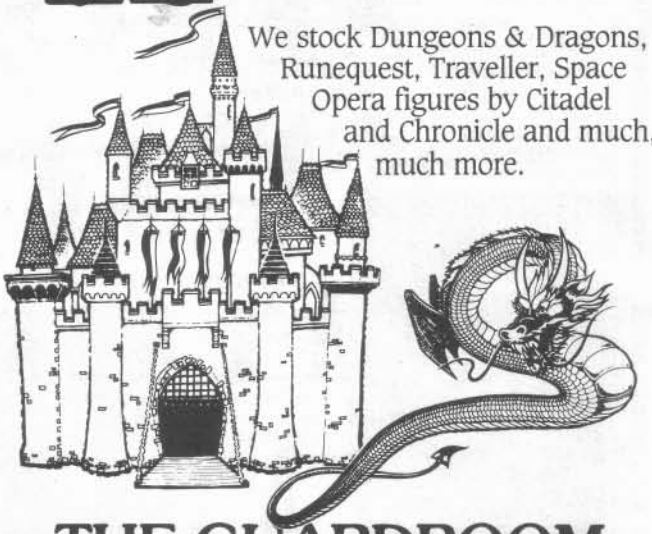

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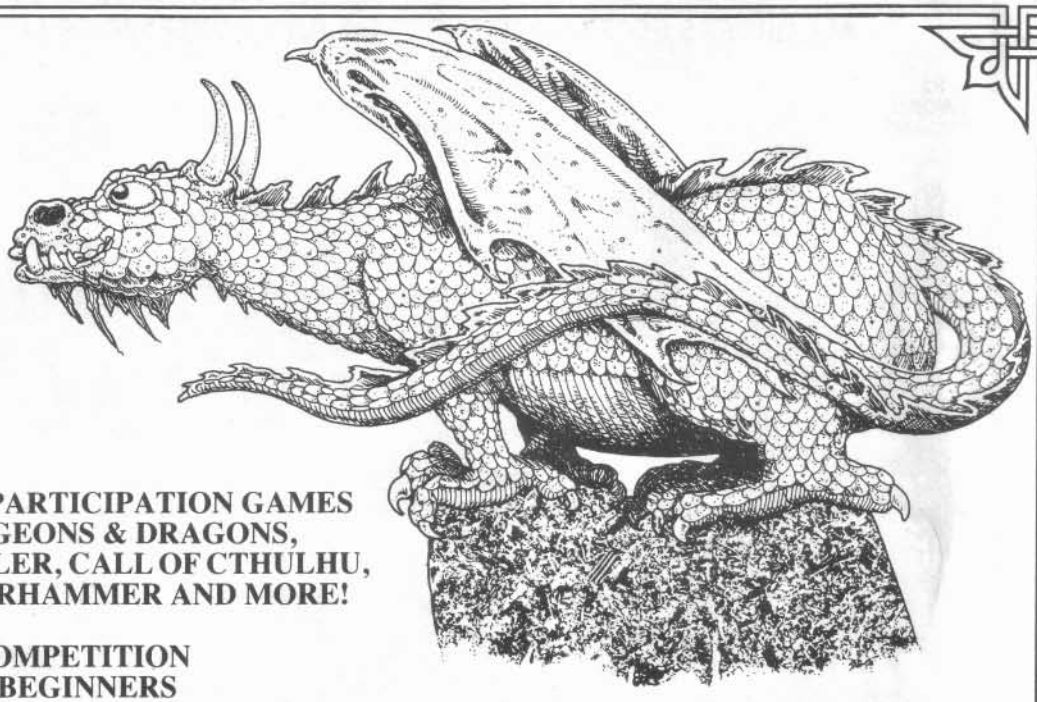

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WHITE DWARF

Issue 55 July 1984

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The adventure gaming 'hobby' is dying. The US market leader had to sack about 150 employees during the last year and several other companies have ceased trading. But, I ask myself, what does this mean? True, several companies have gone out of business and *TSR* have got rid of a lot of people. But this is not the end; it merely signals change. Adventure gaming is still popular and *growing*, but in a different format. Book companies and computer games companies are entering the market to meet the need of changing desires. I believe the adventure gamer of the 80s is alive and kicking but requires convenience and simplicity in game mechanics due to personal time constraints. Fun and excitement are *not*, however, to be sacrificed. Successful games companies of the future must get the balance right to give players more play, less delay!

Ian Livingstone

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The Name of the Game

A Beginner's Guide to Role-Playing Games
by Marcus L Rowland

Part 4 *of a series explaining what role-playing games are about and how to get started.*

Previous articles explained the mechanics of role-playing, and looked at Fantasy and Science Fiction role-playing games. This last article examines some other types of games. For convenience they are grouped under generic headings.

FASTER THAN A SPEEDING BULLET – SUPERHERO GAMES
Most people dream of having secret powers, so it isn't surprising that some role-playing games are based on comics which feature superheroes.

Much of the fun of these games comes from effective role-playing. No red-blooded Superhero fights a Supervillain without a speech on ethics and the futility of crime, and few Supervillains will kill a Superhero without constructing an elaborate (and usually fallible) death trap, and indulging in some heavy gloating.

Champions – Hero Games
A point-allocation system makes it possible to generate characters without rolling dice, and the combat system accurately reflects the earth-shaking duels found in many comics.

Characters have eight prime requisites, all initially at a normal human rating of 10, then improved by paying Power Points. There are several figured characteristics, which can also be adjusted by paying the appropriate number of points. More points buy skills, powers (such as Flight or X-Ray Vision), and equipment.

Expenditure over 100 points must be countered by disadvantages like bad luck, personality problems, or dependent relatives who occasionally get involved in adventures.

The combat system is fairly complex, with many different types of attack and defence. Characters make a roll to hit, modified by values for skill, power ratings, and characteristics. Some or all of the attack is absorbed by the victim's defences, with any residue causing physical or mental harm. The calculations behind this process are moderately complex, but most of the hard work is done during the design process. Recovery is rapid, and the rules make most attacks survivable.

Champions is the most widely played superhero game, and is reasonably easy to learn and play. It is compatible with *Espionage* and *Autoduel Champions* (see below), and supported by supplements and scenarios. Available Material: Boxed Set (rules, scenario, dice); *Champions 2* (rules extensions etc); *Enemies I, II* (pregenerated villains); Scenarios.

Superworld – Chaosium Inc
Generation is by a point-allocation system, in this case derived from randomly rolled characteristics resembling those of *RuneQuest*, and characters spend points to purchase enhanced characteristics, skills, or powers, and must buy off excess points by accepting disadvantages. The rules are more streamlined than those of *Champions*. Available Material: Boxed Set (rules, dice); *Bad Medicine for Dr Drugs* (scenario).

Villains and Vigilantes – Fantasy Games Unlimited
The current edition suggests basing the characters' characteristics on those of the players, then adding randomly selected powers and skills. Players must reject one of the powers rolled, and accept one randomly-selected disadvantage. The combat system involves levels and a table cross-referencing powers and defences.

V&V is moderately complicated, but players with a little experience will find it reasonably easy to learn and play. Available Material: Boxed Set (rules, scenario); Rules only; *Opponents* (pregenerated villains); Scenarios.

Golden Heroes – Burley/Haines
This British game was originally available by mail order only, but it will be reissued by *Games Workshop* in a professional format this month (July). Four prime requisites (Ego, Strength, Dexterity and Vigour) produce figured characteristics. Hits to kill and concuss are rolled separately, using 1d6 per point of Vigour. Each character has between 5 to 10 powers that are randomly selected. However, rather than roll a new power the player can choose to upgrade a power the player already has, or select an advantageous background.

The current system involves several novel ideas of scenario and campaign conduct, which will be included in the new edition. The rules are fast and easily learned. No additional material is available, yet. Available Material: Boxed Set (rules, scenarios, dice).

MODERN DAY MYTHS – SPY RPG'S
Most RPG's involve an escapist element, and some of the most escapist fiction is set firmly in the modern world. Combining these elements produces the modern-day spy RPG.

Top Secret – TSR
This was the first spy RPG, featuring a character generation system resembling *D&D*. Prime requisites are generated randomly, then the character is assigned to an intelligence agency branch. Each branch fosters different skills (theft, assassination, etc), and skills improve as the character gains levels.

No rules expansions have been published, but scenarios are available. A good game for players wanting to convert from *D&D* with the minimum of trouble. Available Material: Boxed Set (rules, scenario, dice); Scenarios.

Espionage – Hero Games
Espionage is a new system, with character generation derived from the *Champions* rules and compatible with *Autoduel Champions*. The rules only cover CIA agents, but it seems likely that expansions will deal with other services, such as MI6 and the KGB.

A good game for referees familiar with *Champions*, and anyone wanting a slightly more realistic approach to spying. The design is slightly untidy, and may put off beginners who aren't familiar with *Champions*. Available Material: Boxed Set (rules, scenario, dice); *Border Crossing* (scenario).

James Bond, the Role Playing Game – Victory Games
This new game is a media spinoff, based on the 1980's conception of Fleming's hero. The emphasis is on gadgetry, girls, and guns, but the rules are well-designed, flexible and allow the development of characters in a variety of intelligence agencies. Several supplements and scenarios are available.

James Bond seems likely to dominate this RPG area, simply because of its name. It works well, and is reasonably easy to learn. Available Material: Boxed Set (rules, character sheets, dice); Rules only; Game Masters pack; Q manual (equipment); Scenarios (*Dr No, Goldfinger* etc).

CHALLENGING THE UNKNOWN – FANTASTIC ADVENTURERS

Several RPG's deal with man's desire to explore the unknown and explain the inexplicable. Characters like Doc Savage and Indiana Jones are popular because their adventures begin in a relatively normal world, but still contain elements of fantasy and ultimate horror.

Call of Cthulhu – Chaosium Inc
Set in the 1920's, *Call of Cthulhu* is probably the most horrific RPG available, being based on the Cthulhu Mythos of H P Lovecraft. Characters are investigators (professors, reporters, etc), who gradually uncover strange truths which will slowly drive them insane.

Briefly, the stories deal with a race of alien deities who ruled the world before the evolution of mankind. They still live, some exiled to space while others are trapped in crypts beneath the sea. Many other alien races lurk in the lost corners of the world, also bearing dark secrets. Various cults and mystics know that they exist, and try to use potent spells and sacrifices to control or worship them. Knowledge of these beings brings strange powers, and simultaneously drives the initiated insane.

At first characters have no knowledge of the Cthulhu Mythos, and are as sane as their characteristics will allow. Each brush with the forces of darkness adds to the character's knowledge of the Cthulhu Mythos and simultaneously lowers Sanity. If sanity is reduced by more than 20% in a single adventure, the character becomes insane; if sanity drops to zero the character can never be cured, and becomes an NPC (and probably a cultist).

This system is supported by a supplement and numerous adventures, and can be adapted to other eras and situations with no supernatural element. The rules are clear and suitable for beginners. Available Material: Boxed Set (2 rulebooks, sourcebook, etc); *The Cthulhu Companion* (rules expansions); Scenarios/Scenario collections.

Daredevils – Fantasy Games Unlimited
This game is set in the 1930's, and is based on the pulp adventures of characters like Doc Savage and the Shadow.

The complications of this game's character generation and combat systems make it unsuitable for beginners, but experienced players may enjoy it. Additional Material: Boxed Set (rulebook, 4 scenarios); Scenario collections.

Mercenaries, Spies, and Private Eyes – FBI
A present-day adventure game with a character generation system derived from *Tunnels and Trolls*, incorporating modern weapons and psionic powers. It is easily learned and run, and may suit beginners. Available Material: Rulebook, *Jade Jaguar* (solo scenario), *Stormhaven* (for *Espionage* as well).

After The Holocaust – Disaster Games
Games dealing with Earth after some natural or man-made disaster are a subspecies of science fiction RPG's. The period can be a few decades to several thousand years in the future, and the disaster can range from nuclear war to the energy crisis.

Car Wars – Steve Jackson Games
American civilisation has almost collapsed as fossil fuel reserves are exhausted. Powerful electrical vehicles (charged by nuclear reactors and alternative power sources) allow communication between towns, which have become armed enclaves besieged by marauding cycle gangs and outlaws. Most vehicles are armed and armoured, equipped with an array of machine guns, rocket launchers and flame throwers which would warm the heart of Mad Max. Vehicle combats have become a sport and a necessity for survival.

The basic game deals with vehicle design and combat, with character generation almost ignored. Two supplements, *Sunday Drivers*, and *Truck Stop*, cover character generation in more depth, and add rules for pedestrians and heavy vehicles. A recent innovation is *Autoduel Champions*, a publication converting the *Car Wars* vehicle design rules for use with *Champions* and *Espionage*, and adding super powers to the *Car Wars* rules.

While not a full RPG, *Car Wars* is an enjoyable system which allows limited character generation, and is easy to learn and play. Available Materials: Pocket Box Set (rules, counters, etc); *Sunday Drivers* (rules, counters, etc); *Truck Stop* (rules, counters, etc); *Expansion Sets* (road, counters, etc); *Autoduel Champions* (A4 Book).

Gamma World – TSR
Recently re-issued, *Gamma World* is set on Earth centuries after a disastrous nuclear war. Civilisation has collapsed, and semi-barbaric tribesmen must reconquer a wilderness populated by hostile tribes, mutants, and a few remaining robots. The game is similar to *D&D*, with characters accumulating points for level increases and collecting technological equipment to aid survival.

Gamma World is easy to learn and run. Available Material: Boxed Set (rules, map, etc); Scenarios.

Aftermath – FGU
Another post-holocaust game, set a few years after a nuclear war (or some other disaster). Character generation is complex and heavily orientated towards a survivalist ethos, with combat and weaponry the main factors in determining events. Available Material: Boxed Set (rules etc); Scenarios.

THE PAST IS ANOTHER COUNTRY – HISTORICAL GAMES

Most eras have been the subject of at least one RPG. Their number and diversity make it impossible to cover them all, but a few of the most popular follow.

Bushido – Fantasy Games Unlimited
Set in feudal Japan, *Bushido* uses a design system for character generation and attempts a realistic portrayal of the period while incorporating some mythical and magical elements.

FGU's usual attention to detail has made this game very popular, and the rules encourage role-playing instead of violence. Most aspects are easily learned, and the game is suitable for beginners. Available Material: Boxed Set (books, maps, charts, etc); Scenarios.

En Garde! – GDW
This game is set in the 17th and 18th centuries, and can be played without a referee. Characters are members (or potential members) of the French aristocracy, climbing through society and defeating rivals by intrigue or in duels.

A game which works well as a postal game or if all the players are moderately experienced. The absence of scenarios and direction by a referee sometimes slows play if the players are inexperienced. Available Material: Rulebook.

Boot Hill – TSR
A Western game of cowboys and outlaws, using level concepts and combat methods similar to *D&D*. Easily learned, and suitable for beginners. Available Material: Boxed Set (rules etc); Scenarios.

STARTING TO PLAY

Beginners sometimes have trouble finding other players, or learning more about the games they are thinking of buying. There are several solutions, all fairly easy:

1: Look for a local games club. Most magazines and fanzines publish advertisements, and most games shops have a notice board with club announcements. A reasonably large RPG club should have members with an interest in most available games, and give you a chance to try them before buying. Two warnings – don't get involved in campaigns unless you are sure that you will want to continue playing, and don't commit yourself to too many activities simultaneously. It's a good idea to find an introductory scenario or beginners campaign, if someone will run one. Most Universities have some sort of club, and many will admit outsiders.

2: If no club is available, try the personal adverts which are sometimes carried in magazines and on shop boards. Many other players have difficulty finding opponents.

3: Find out what the staff of games shops recommend – they usually try everything available.

4: Start your own club, or place your own advertisements. See if any of your friends are interested.

5: Visit one of the games fairs, like *Dragonmeet* or *Games Day*. It's usually possible to find any game being played at these events, though sometimes difficult to get a place and join in. Games fairs often auction second-hand games, which are sometimes real bargains.

6: Take a chance. Buy the game, and try it on your own. Roll up a few characters, and try out the combat system. See if there are any solo scenarios available. If you like the game, advertise for other players. If you don't, put it up for sale and see if the person who buys it has any games that might interest you.

Once you have started playing, keep an eye on the advertisements and news in games magazines. If a game is popular it's likely that supplements and scenarios will be published by the manufacturer or by independent groups. It's also likely that articles and scenarios will be published. Read what's written for other systems, since it's likely that you can adapt some aspects for your own use. Read the letters, and keep a look out for other players in your area.□

SPIDERBITE

A Scenario for Basic D&D and AD&D for 1st-2nd Level Characters
by Oliver Johnson

DUNGEON MASTER ONLY
This scenario should be virtually read out to the players as it is. Those portions of text that are boxed and labelled **DM**, however, should not be read out and are for your eyes only! The scenario is presented initially for *AD&D*. The Basic *D&D* equivalents of *AD&D* are given in brackets, where necessary. Other information is clearly labelled for *Basic*.

PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION
You have been employed by Gorling Grislgum, an ageing cleric, to explore an ancient tomb complex located somewhere in the tropical forests to the south of your country. For days your ship has been sailing up the Mosquito River. You passed the last mark of civilisation a week ago, a settlement 200 miles downriver. The jungle on either side of the shimmering river is unnaturally quiet, save for the occasional squawk of a brightly hued parrot or the tortured cries of monkeys. Sometimes at night a ghastly howl will break through the gloom and continue its sad ululation for minutes on end. The river-folk believe these to be the songs of departed souls, but Gorling maintains that they are merely the cries of a sloth.

One morning, you see, set into a thinly wooded basalt knoll protruding from the jungle, a creeper-entwined head staring sightlessly out over the trackless expanse of green.

Gorling comes out on deck. 'The head, he tells you, 'is a representation of Krakata, who ruled a jungle kingdom here centuries ago. According to legend, his final command was that his head should be carved in rock over the lair of a giant spider. This spider, weaving a cocoon around the king's body, would keep it sleeping until he should one day return to rally his people in times of trouble.

'I think we can discount this legend. All that remains of that jungle civilisation today is a small tribe of savage cannibals who worship the spider-god Hlo-hlo as their totem deity. Like many degenerate peoples, they have woven a tangled web of superstition and folklore that harkens back to former, greater days. However, since the natives of the region believe that Krakata sleeps within the tomb and will one day emerge in all his regal finery, they are extremely hostile towards any strangers. Consequently we must be circumspect.'

The ship is left anchored in midstream with a small crew while Gorling and yourselves row to the bank and disembark on what appear to be the lichen stained stones of an old wharf. The jungle is a thick green curtain in front of you. Every step forward is impeded by choking creepers and the thick boles of trees. You cannot now see the monolith because of the canopy of foliage overhead, but an old track leads in the general direction you wish to go. Gloriously coloured parrots flutter about through shafts of sunlight above you; you can almost believe they mock you with their cries as you set out. The old trail is marked every few yards by weather-worn, moss covered idols on either side.

Gorling Grislgum
5th level Cleric; AC6; HP18; Alignment: Lawful Neutral.
Str: 8; Int: 13; Wis: 13; Con: 6; Dex: 8; Cha: 13.
Spells: 1st: *Bless; cure light wounds* x2; *sanctuary*.
2nd: *Hold person; slow poison; spiritual hammer*.
3rd: *Prayer*.
Equipment: Studded leather, shield, hammer, holy symbol, material components, *potion of healing*.

Gorling might have advanced further in his Temple, but he has always been more interested in his academic pursuits (history, archaeology, etc) than in the rituals and tenets of his faith. He is physically not a brave man, and prefers to leave the business of melee to his hirelings (the PCs) while he assists with his magic. Although many think him just a bumbling, absent-minded old duffer, he actually possesses a shrewd intelligence and tremendous moral courage.

Jungle Encounter Table
(roll d20)

1-5	Natives (1-6 *kasha* + 0-2 *ushok*, see later)
6	Snake (constrictor [rock python], poisonous [pitviper] or spitting [cobra])
7	1-4 jungle stirges
8-9	1-4 giant ticks (robber flies)
10	Giant lizard
11-13	2-8 large spiders
14	Wild boar
15-18	Non-harmful/nuisance encounter (monkeys, parrots, brightly patterned dragonflies, etc)
19	Jaguar (tiger)
20	Couatl (sabre-toothed tiger)

The chance of an encounter is usually 25%; check every twenty minutes.

DM: Roll once on the random encounter table for the party's journey to the monolith. This will take them almost an hour of enervating slog in the drenching jungle heat. Any character stepping from the ancient track has a chance (85%; check every 10 feet he moves from the track) of sinking in quicksand. Roll d8 for any character who wanders into quicksand: 1-5, sinks knee deep; 6-7, waist deep; 8, up to the character's chest. A trapped character will sink at 2 feet per round unless thrown a rope. It will take a single character 1-6 segments to pull a sinking colleague to safety.

Any character sinking in quicksand will be attacked by 1-3 giant leeches of the 1 hit dice variety [*MM Basic*: treat as lowest dice stirge]. The character will not be aware of this until, and if, the leeches wound him and he starts to lose blood. This will then lead to a further, greater threat when the character extricates himself from the quicksand, for the smell of fresh blood will entice down *jungle stirges* from the upper branches where they bask in the sun. Jungle stirges are treated in most respects as normal stirges except for their appearance – they are noxious, ragged beings with membranous batwings, tinted green by the lichen which clumps their fur.

The path is dotted with mantraps, of which there are three kinds (roll d6):

1-2 6' pit with wooden stakes at the bottom; a character will take d6 damage from the fall and d4 from each stake that hits him –

Character's AC:	10-8	7-5	4-3	2
No of stakes:	3	2	1	0

3-4 10' pit with 2-8 vipers at the bottom; a character will take d6 damage from the fall itself.

5-6 Snare – a trapped character will be caught by the foot and whipped up to the top of a tree. His comrades will take 1-6 rounds to get him down, during which time he has a 70% chance per round of attracting the attention of 5 jungle stirges unless he specifically states that he is not struggling in the snare.

There is a 25% chance of the character at the front of the party stepping into a trap for every ten minutes they proceed along the track. Once thus warned, the chance of setting off further traps is only 10% every ten minutes.

Finally you reach the edge of a clearing about 35 yards across. The sheer cliffs of the knoll rise up before you on the other side of the clearing. The crudely carved face seems massive at this proximity; the eyeslits 80' above the ground appear to be small caves etched into the limestone. It is covered by a thick drapery of creepers. Across the clearing you can see a rough stone altar, and beyond that a large boulder daubed with curious red and mauve glyphs. This apparently blocks a cave entrance. This cave entrance seems to correspond to the 'mouth' of the monolithic stone head.

DM: If the characters enter the clearing without looking around first, they will be attacked by the native guards, (who will have surprise) left to watch over this sacred place. If the characters think to investigate the perimeter of the clearing before stepping from the cover of the undergrowth, they will have a normal surprise chance on the native guards.

The group of native guards consists of seven *kasha* and one *ushok* (see *Natives*, later), standing guard in pairs around the clearing.

ushok: AC7; HP8; first level; Move: 12"; No of attacks: 1; Damage: 1-6. (Morale: 9.)

kasha: AC8; HP1, 3, 2, 6, 4, 2, 2; 0th level; Move: 12"; No of attacks: 1; Damage: 1-6 (club) or 1-3 + poison (dart). (Morale: 7.)

ENCOUNTERS

1: Pit Trap

DM: There is a deep pit covered by thin rush matting behind the altar stone. Anyone running (eg fleeing from the fight with the natives) towards the blocked cave mouth will automatically plunge into this pit – although by rolling dexterity or less on 2d10 they can seize hold of creepers around the pit's edge and then drag themselves out again. If a character falls, refer to **10**. If the characters are not fleeing from combat, they will easily spot the trap and can give the pit a wide berth.

2a: Boulder

The boulder blocking the king's mouth is carved with native glyphs which have been painted in with sticky coloured dyes.

DM: If Gorling is still alive he will be able to provide a halting translation of the glyphs – '*Angry...something..of ancestors...wait within Krakata's maw...mouth*, rather. The glyph daubed in purple is the one corresponding to Krakata's name, by the way.'

A total of 40 strength points is required to roll the boulder aside. The red paint is in fact some vile bacterial culture prepared from the body fluids of jungle stirges. There is a 40% chance if the characters moving the boulder don't take precautions (and a 25% chance if they do) that they will contract a connective tissue disorder which will begin to show after 4-5 days.

(*If the boulder is rolled aside*:) You are terrified by a loud wailing that issues from the dark cave mouth. This is followed by the flitting white spectral forms of ancestral spirits racing ▷

▷towards you out of the blackness.

DM: The characters must save vs *fear* as if cast by a 6th level MU (save vs magic or flee for 6 rounds); this saving throw is at +5, but even if the save is made the effects are equivalent to a *scare* (fall into a fit of trembling – if forced to, will fight at -1) spell. If any characters turn and flee, don't forget the pit immediately behind them – they will forget all about this in their terror. If any characters run into the jungle don't forget that they may blunder into traps, quicksand or random encounters!

The ancestral spirits pose no further threat – once out into the daylight they will flit over the treetops, dissipating with a thin, faint howl as they make their way to their place on the Outer Planes.

2b: Entrance Tunnel
A cavern leads from the mouth into the monolithic head. Primitive paintings of hunting and battle scenes adorn the walls.

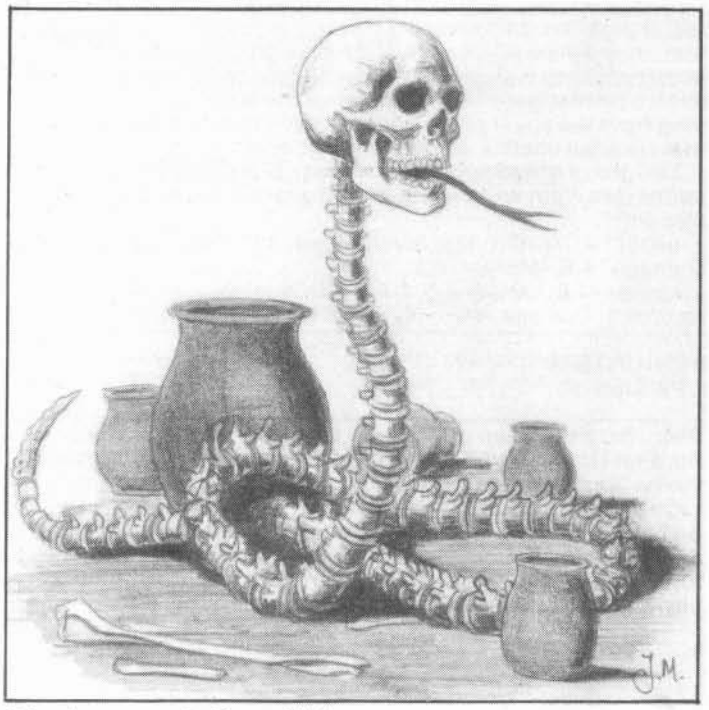
DM: If the boulder (**2a**) is still in place – that is, if the characters are returning by this route after entering the complex via the pit trap (**1**) – then the spirits will still be trapped here. A swarm of wailing, white figures will surround the party like moths around a light; saving throws must be made as detailed in **2a**. However, the spirits do no physical damage, yearning only for egress that they might depart to their ancestral hunting grounds. Panicked characters will thus be pursued down the tunnel to the boulder and harrassed by the spirits until they have pushed it aside. These spirits cannot be turned by a cleric because of their fanatical centuries-long desire to escape from this place.

3: Pool Chamber
There is a pool in the centre of this large limestone cavern. The liquid appears to be clear, fresh water.

DM: Anyone remaining within 10 feet of the pool for more than a minute will be subject to a *sleep* spell (saving throw vs spells allowed, however). Whether the players fall asleep or not, the surface of the pool will start to come to life and begin to creep and ooze towards any slumbering characters, eventually enveloping them completely unless they are woken or moved by their colleagues. It is in fact a giant amoeba.

Amoeba: (for *AD&D* & *Basic*) AC9; HP14; HD3; Move: 4"; No of attacks: 1; Its touch acts an acid causing 2-8 points of damage. (Morale: 11.) Because of its amorphous form the amoeba will only take ½ damage from edged/pointed weapons.

(*Once the 'liquid' has left the pool*:) A stone urn is now visible on the dry bed of the pool. You can just make out some-



thing brown and shiny with the urn.

DM: Within the stone urn is a brown onyx amulet in the shape of a squatting demon. The amulet functions as a *Scarab of Protection*. (*Basic D&D*: treat as a *Ring of Protection*.)

4: Ways Up and Down
There is a hole in the ceiling of the tunnel. A piece of rope, made of loosely plaited creepers, leads up into the darkness. A set of steps, hewn from the rock and cluttered with rubble, leads down to the north.

DM: The rope is quite safe if used by no more than one person at a time.

5: Charnel Chamber
You thrust a torch into the room as you climb up. Even before you have seen anything, you notice the horrible stench. The room is littered with gory, half eaten remnants of a savage feast. In the guttering torchlight you see a rough stairway on the far wall; a glimmer of daylight filters through from above!

DM: As the characters climb up in turn, there is a 30% cumulative chance per round that the bull ape sleeping behind a slab of rock to the north will awaken and attack. It will automatically surprise the party as it charges out, bellowing insanely. Ape: (for *Basic* & *AD&D*) AC7; HP9; HD1+1; Move: 9"; No of attacks: 3; Damage: 1-3/1-3/1-4. (Morale: 9.)

If the fight goes on for more than 3 rounds then the rest of the ape tribe in **6** will hear the noise and descend the steps from their lair to join in.

6: Ape Lair
Sunlight streams in through shafts leading to the collosal head's eyes. On a granite block in the centre of the room lies a large golden facemask studded with shards of coloured volcanic glass. The sunlight falling on this throws extraordinary patterns of scintillating colour on the limestone walls.

DM: This is the lair of the apes, and if they have not already descended to battle the party they will be encountered here. Apes: (*Basic* & *AD&D*) AC7; HP5, 5, 4, 6, 3; HD1+1; Move: 9"; No of attacks: 3; Damage: 1-3/1-3/1-4. (Morale: 7.)

The face mask was part of the royal regalia of Krakata. It is an object much venerated by the apes, who will fight to the death to retain it. The mask is worth about 200gps in a purely financial sense, but it may cost the characters their lives if left behind (see *Getting Out Alive*, below). Because of its size and shape, it has an effective encumbrance value of 45 (equivalent to 450gps weight).

If the characters leave by means of the eyeslits then the climb to the ground is an easy one because of the vines covering the monolith's face.

7: Krakata's Treasure
The room is strewn with earthenware urns, tribal artifacts, animal-skin shields and barbed spears, of superior workmanship to those used by the natives outside.

DM: The guardian of this treasure is a Necrophidius (*Fiend Folio*):
AC2; HP8; HD2; Move: 9"; No of attacks: 1; Damage: 1-8 + paralysis.
For *Basic D&D*, the guardian is a crystal living statue (see the rulebook for further information), set here when the monolithic head was built:
AC4; HP10; HD3; Move: 10"; No of Attacks: 1-6/1-6. (Morale: 11; immune to *sleep*.)
The main treasure can be found within the urns, and consists of the following:
A bone wand which, when waved over a surface or between two objects, will cause a layer of cobwebs to appear magically. These webs are only as strong as a normal cobweb – they will not entrap a being (except for flies, of course). The usefulness of the item to the characters will lie in its trickery value – to deceive an enemy into thinking that a certain chest had not been opened for years, perhaps, or in covering an archway so that pursuers didn't think anyone had passed through it...
A jade bust. There is a bowl-shaped depression in the plinth of this artifact, and if a character allows 1hp worth of his blood to fall into the bowl, the bust will open its lips and speak cryptically of future events in a manner equivalent to an *augury*. The device will work each time it is given blood, up to a maximum of three times a day.
Numerous items of jewellery worth some 15000 silver pieces.

8: The Web of Hlo-hlo
A frieze of cured animal skins is stretched across the northern end of this vast subterranean cavern, which accomodates a thick-stranded web of stupendous proportions. The upper moorings of the web are invisible in the darkness, but you are able to see some of the pale objects caught in it. To your horror you realize they are human bones. Enshrouded in a cocoon at the centre of the web, some 30 feet above you, is what appears to be a purple bundle. Gold gleams dimly from it in the torchlight.

DM: The 'bundle' is in fact the mummified body of King Krakata, protected by the giant spider Hlo-hlo which has for centuries been worshipped as a god. The purple shroud in which Krakata is wrapped is the other item the characters will probably need in order to survive [see *Getting Out Alive*]. The gold ornaments on his body are worth 120gps.
To dislodge the body, one or more characters will need to climb up into the web. Anyone but a thief or assassin has a 10% chance per round of climbing of becoming enmeshed in the web, and will then need 2-10 rounds to cut or burn the strands away. Perhaps surprisingly, a character under *spider climb* (*AD&D* only) cannot become enmeshed.
As soon as anyone touches the web – it is next to impossible to cross the floor of this chamber without doing so – the spider will edge down from an upper recess, scuttle across the web and drop onto anyone climbing it. Allow 3 rounds before anyone notes its presence.
Hlo-hlo the Spider: AC4; HP14; HD4+4; Move: 3" (12" in web); No of attacks: 1; Damage: 2-8. (Morale: 10.)

9: Spider's Eggs
The air here is warm, damp and stifling. There is a cluster of pale, translucent spheres lying together on the ground. Bringing your torches close to one, you can make out a squirming spidery form within.

10: Bones

DM: Unless characters have climbed down using the creepers or else come here from **9**, they will have fallen 30 feet and thus taken 3d6 falling damage. This is reduced by 1d6 if the falling character lands on the neat pile of human bones stacked at the bottom of the shaft (85% chance of this), as the bones will break his fall. Some ceremonial robes and necklaces on the skeletons seem to suggest that these people have been the victims of some kind of ritual sacrifice to the 'god' Hlo-hlo.

Getting Out Alive (For the DM only)
By the time the party come to leave Krakata's tomb complex, the rest of the native tribe will have learned of their presence – either directly from surviving guards or by discovering the slaughtered bodies around the monolith. A large force will come to deal with any who manage to survive the tomb and consist of the witchdoctor, eight *ushok* and twenty *kasha*:
Witchdoctor: 7th level cleric with some MU spells; AC7; HP14; Alignment: Neutral; fights as a 2nd level owing to age and consequent infirmity.
Spells: 1st: *Cause/cure light wounds; spider climb; cause/remove fear*. 2nd: *Web; hold person; silence 15' radius*. 3rd: *Speak with dead; cause/cure disease*. 4th: *Poison/neutralize poison*.
For *Basic D&D*, the Witchdoctor is a 6th level magic-user/cleric, other stats as *AD&D*. His spells are: 1st level: *Cause/cure light wounds; cause/remove fear*. 2nd level: *Web, hold person, silence 15' radius, levitate*. 3rd level: *Dispel magic*.
Ushok warriors (for *Basic* & *AD&D*)

	Level	*AC*	*HP*	*Weapon*
First	1st	8	5	spear
Second	2nd	8	9	spear
Third	3rd	7	14	club & shield
Fourth	1st	7	3	club & shield
Fifth	1st	8	6	spear
Sixth	1st	8	2	spear
Seventh	2nd	7	8	club & shield
Eighth	2nd	8	7	spear

Kasha warriors (*Basic* & *AD&D*)
AC8; HP6, 3, 3, 1, 6, 2, 1, 4, 3, 3, 4, 1, 6, 2, 3, 5, 2, 2, 5, 5; 0th level; Move: 12"; No of attacks: 1; Damage: 1-6 (club) or 1-3 plus poison (dart). (Morale: 7. *Ushok's* morale: 9.)
This probably looks like the end of the party but there is an easy way out, if the characters recall what Gorling told them about Krakata's prophesied return from the dead. By donning the purple robe and golden facemask, a character can step out of the monolith and simply by gesturing can cause the natives to prostrate themselves in adoration. It will be simple then for the party to walk past the natives, who wait patiently to hear the commanding voice of their revenant king, and hurriedly return to the ship. Using this strategem to escape should be worth *at least* as much as actually overcoming all the natives in a straight fight – half of the experience going to the character(s) who had the idea in the first place, and the other half going to the single individual who has the courage to actually go out and try it.
After returning to civilisation, Gorling (if alive) will establish the intrinsic value of all items and artifacts brought out of Krakata's tomb and pay the surviving characters 10% of this amount to divide between them, as a bonus for the danger they encountered. This will be in addition to the regular amount he is paying them, of course. If Gorling is dead, the division of spoils is up to them, though they will have to pay the sailors if they wish to return home.
Native Warriors. Most of the warriors of the tribe are 0th level, primarily hunters whose favoured weapons are clubs and dart javelins. (Against human opponents they will coat these darts with an aromatic resin; anyone struck by the dark will have to save against poison at +3 (*Basic*: +6) or lose 4hp per round until they are either dead or else saved by a *neutralize poison* spell.) They called in their own tongue *kasha*.
The special champions, or *ushok*, of the tribe are fighters of 1st level or higher. They are specialised warriors of the tribe in its dealings (ie battles) with outsiders. They disdain the use of missile weapons and the trapping skills which the hunter-warriors develop, preferring to fight their enemies at close hand with poison-tipped spear or shield and obsidian-edged club. *Ushok* are readily distinguished from the lower-status *kasha* by their hair (which they wear plaited into eight thick strands which hand down to their shoulders), the 'spiders eyes' warpaint design and the russet, furry cloaks which are designed to spread out into eight sections when the *ushok* is leaping and running through the jungle towards his prey.
Special note: The poisoned darts used by the *kasha* are quite effective at a distance (as in clearings, from boats, etc) but are almost useless in thick undergrowth. The close proximity of the trees makes it difficult to get a clear shot in. Apply a 'to hit' penalty of -3 at medium and -7 at long ranges. A clever party will realize this and use it to tactical advantage.□

In Open Box, *fantasy games are reviewed.*

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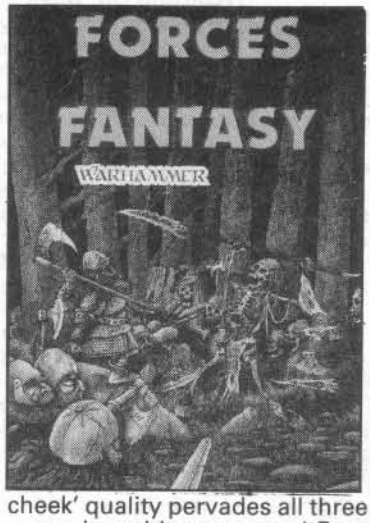


Forces of Fantasy is the first *Warhammer* supplement and physically it follows the same format, being presented in three booklets.

Volume 1 (*Forces of Fantasy*) contains 24 major army lists covering the standard races such as men, elves and orcs plus a few exotics (chaos and undead). Although the introduction includes a points value system to give balanced forces, I find it superfluous, since one of the keys to a successful battle is the *unbalanced* potentials of the opponents. Technically it is irritating in two ways: firstly it does not use whole numbers and resorts to annoying fractions, and secondly, it is not exhaustive enough to include all variables – especially magic and/or artifacts. The lists themselves are fine if you don't own many figures; if you do then you should ignore the random generation system. The troop types are often restrictive and undeveloped, also the degree of armour available to each troop type is not specifically stated and is merely a YES/NO. Sections covering special rules applicable to troop types are included – as are examples of appropriate heroes and wizards which, although useful are not very detailed.

The second volume (*Fighting Fantasy Battles*) is really quite good and deals with how to set up the wargames table and items such as siege engines; in particular it covers those irritating parts of *Warhammer* that didn't make any sense at all! A revised turn sequence, a weapons differentiation table and further notes on leadership, cool (!), intelligence, willpower, mounted troops and mercenaries are included. There are useful sections on organisation and painting but the piece on tactics is far too general to be of any real assistance. The chapter, *Regiments of Renown*, contains interesting potted histories about sample regiments and gives statistics for the leader and notes on the regiment's armaments, dress, shield design and battlecry (if any!). The last section expands on the examples of heroes and wizards given in the army lists and offers tables of mounts, followers and talismans.

Volume 3 (*Arcane Magicks*) enlarges on the catalogue of spells, magical weapons, enchanted monsters and artifacts. The treasure section is well set out and covers the contents of poor domestic dwellings up to the personal treasure of a merchant. The magical monster chapter examines in detail creatures from genies to balrogs in both physical and magical aspects. The whole spell system is reviewed and structured in a much more intelligible way and states which magical items are required for success. Magical item tables replace those in *Warhammer* and are much more developed and inspired. Magical weapons are subdivided into three major areas – magical, power and rune – giving the special attack mode of the weapon and their extraordinary abilities.

The package is profusely illustrated with almost consistently good artwork – in particular the second volume's banners and shield drawings. The content varies in usefulness and a 'tongue in cheek' quality pervades all three volumes. I would recommend *Forces of Fantasy* to those people who enjoyed *Warhammer* but were unhappy with parts of it – the additions will undoubtedly improve it and hopefully not just complicate it. The number of additions do raise one question: why was *Warhammer* so jam-packed with glitches in the first place?

Physical quality:	**6**	**Enjoyment:**	**9**
Playability:	**7-9**	**Complexity:**	**8**
Skill:	**7-9**	**Rules:**	**6**
Overall:	**7**	**Jon Sutherland**	

DUNGEON MODULES
X5 – Temple of Death **£4.50**
L2 – The Assassin's Knot **£4.50**
I5 – Lost Tomb of Martek **£4.95**
I6 – Ravencroft **£4.95**
TSR Inc

The nomad tribes of Sind Desert have rallied together under the leadership of the enigmatic figure known as the Master and declared war on your country. Your mission (should you choose to accept it) is to neutralize the threat to the Republic. The second of two parts, *Temple of Death* starts with the characters approaching the Black Mountains – and, beyond them, the strange land of Hule where the evil Master has his stronghold.

The main body of the adventure, once the characters have traversed the Great Pass through the mountains, involves their undercover operation in Hule and eventual penetration of the *Temple of Death*. Hule is an oppressive totalitarian state whose social orders are carefully defined – characters will be of 6th to 10th level, but the major determinant of success will be whether the players have the nous for this kind of adventure. They must enter this foreign land and make their way to its capital without attracting the attention of the Diviners, Hule's 'secret police'.

Frankly, I have not seen a better *D&D* scenario than this. The author, David Cook, has constructed a logical, continually challenging, imaginative and vividly protrayed adventure, and this single module is perhaps one of the three or four best role-playing supplements for any system. As if this were not enough, there is also some excellent artwork by Timothy Truman. Top marks, and my only regret is that the adventure was designed for *Expert* rather than *Advanced* rules.

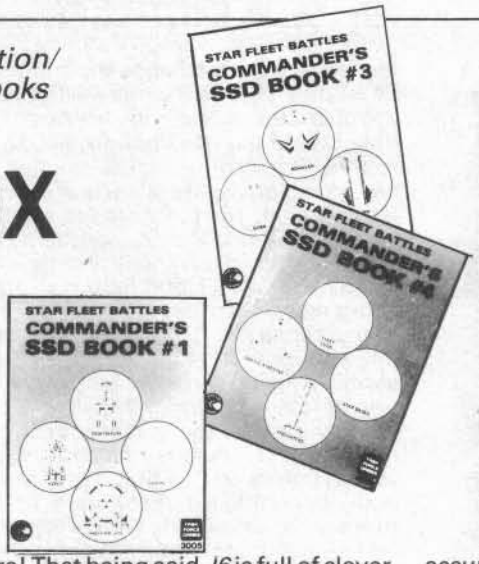
The Assassin's Knot is not quite in the same class as *X5*, but is nonetheless an entertaining murder mystery for *AD&D* characters of levels 2-5. Although one cannot fault the set-up of the adventure, this module gives no feeling of being part of a real world with a real history – unlike the evocative background of *X5*, it is difficult to believe or be interested in the world of *L2*. Younger players may enjoy it for the puzzle aspect, however.

Lost Tomb of Martek is the last of the *Desert of Desolation* trilogy, an *AD&D* module for 7th-9th level characters. It is of the high standard one expects from Tracy Hickman, and there is plenty of fun with spacetime distortion, a Mobius Tower (guess what that is !) and other interesting events as the characters close in on their goal: the tomb of the millenium-dead wizard Martek. There is the sense throughout this adventure that the characters are agents of destiny, heroes fulfilling a chain of events set in motion long ages ago – the author has succeeded admirably in creating this effect, with touches such as the Guilders and Maddogs, dimwitted inbred descendants of, respectively, thieves and paladins/good warriors who became trapped in the tomb over many centuries. However, it is interesting to compare this to *Temple of Death* – both are excellent adventures for characters of roughly the same level, but it is certainly true that after *I5* the characters would have to retire (what could follow such a world-shattering adventure?), whereas *X5* could be used without ending the campaign.

By the same author, with Laura Hickman, *Ravenloft* is a straight Hammer horror yarn – the lands of Barovia are fog shrouded and overlooked by the brooding Castle Ravenloft. Characters of levels 5-7 find themselves playing cat-and-mouse with Count Strahd. But who is the cat and who the mice? The adventure should be a lot of fun – 'light relief' of a nerve-wracking and deadly sort. My only complaint concerns the series of tedious puns – personally, I prefer humour in an adventure to come from the characters themselves rather than being of the sort which works against the fantasy-reality. It is quite difficult enough to convince a group of players that they are actually adventurers in some weird medieval world some-

science fiction/ and rulebooks

BOX



where! That being said, *I6* is full of clever touches, including a variable-outcome generator so that the module can be different each time it's played, and features some first-class illustration and graphics. Ah, the children of the night...

	X5	L2	I5	I6
Presentation:	10	7	10	9
Playability:	9	7	8	9
Enjoyment:	10	6	9	8
Skill:	9	7	8	6
Complexity:	10	8	8	6
Overall:	10	7	9	8

Dave Morris

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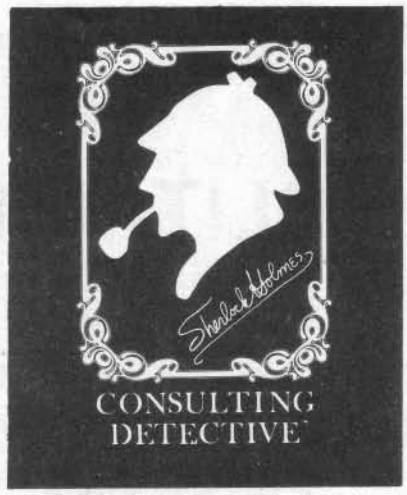
THE MANSION MURDERS £9.95
Sleuth Publications

Tired of Dragon slaying? Sick of blasting Aliens? Or has dread Cthulhù taken your last point of SAN? Perhaps a change of pace is what you need! If, like me, you first read Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's immortal series about Holmes, Watson, Moriarty *et al* as a small boy, then the world in which these heroes moved will always be a special place for you. *Sleuth Publications* have painstakingly recreated it for you in these offerings. Although not a role-playing game in the accepted sense (no characteristics or die rolling for a start), neither is it a boardgame (there isn't a board). Players are asked to imagine that they are a group of Baker Street Irregulars – street urchins who, though more mature, prosperous and clean than those described in *A Study In Scarlet* still aid Holmes in his constant struggle against crime.

Consulting Detective consists of a brief rule book; a map of the London of Holmes' day; a directory to the map, listing all the various protagonists and witnesses in the cases by geographical location; a newspaper archive – which has a wealth of clues in it; a quiz book which enables you to compare your performance with that of Holmes and finally the clue and case books, all in a sturdy 3-ring binder.

The clue and case books are the heart of the game. One first selects a case to solve (there are ten provided) and reads an introduction to it in the case book – here the authors have managed to imitate Conan Doyle's prose style very



accurately. One then looks up clues in the clue book after having found their location using the directory. When you are sure you know who did what to whom and why, you can look up Holmes' solution and grade your performance against his by the number of clues you looked up.

It is possible to play the game with almost any number of players, either co-operating or competing and solitaire play is particularly enjoyable – it took me almost a week to solve the first case, and I even found my sleep was disturbed by thinking about possible solutions.

Although there are only ten cases, each one is put together like a Swiss Watch – with numerous blind alleys and red herrings to throw you off the scent, and the wealth of detail provided is astonishing.

Mansion Murders gives you a further five cases to solve – all of which are of the same infuriating baffling standard as those in *CD* – and you are provided with detailed floorplans for a mansion which plays an important part in each case (the mansion is located in a different area in each one, and is in varying states from palatial to downright seedy).

Both games are profusely illustrated with period illustrations by Paget of Holmes at work and beautifully produced.

I like this game very much and urge you not to be put off by the high price – it's worth every penny!

Presentation:	9	**Complexity - Rules**	3
Enjoyment:	9	**- Cases**	9
Skill:	9	**Overall:**	9

Nic Grecas

COMMANDER'S SSD BOOK 1 £3.95
COMMANDER'S SSD BOOK 2 £3.95
COMMANDER'S SSD BOOK 3 £3.95
Task Force Games

These booklets are creations of the *Amarillo Design Bureau* and published by *Task Force Games* as play aids to the *Commanders Edition* rules of *Starfleet Battles*, though they can be used with the original Designers Edition.

Each booklet contains 48 SSD (Ships System Display) sheets. Book 1 contains the majority of the Federation, Orion, Andromedan and Kzinti Fleets. Book 2 covers the Klingon, Wyn, Lyran and Hydran Ships, while Book 3 includes most of the Romulan, Gorn and Tholian Fleets. The most notable absentees are all Commerical shipping (including Q-ships and Police Ships) and Bases. These will be presented in a separate booklet. Pseudo-fighters, we are told, will be presented in another Supplement.

The SSD sheets hold all the data necessary to fly the ships of your choice; this includes the ship itself, the ship's Turn Mode, how much it costs (in Warp energy) to move your ship, and a rules reference so you can find the ship description – if you have the Commander's Rules. The sheets also have the Weapons Tables used by each type of ship. The main Godsend are the 'check off' boxes (or should that be Chekov?) for crew, boarding parties, drones, probes, anti-drones, shuttles, and mini SSD's for Fighters.

The booklets also present a goodly few new ships and some modifications to some old ships. There's the Federation Strike Cruiser, designed to do the same thing as the Kzinti CV and some Federation Destroyer variants – the DDL and the DDG – both modified to increase Power/Firepower ratio of the under-powered craft. The Federation also gets its own Frigate and a modification to it, the FFG, which adds to the Frigate Firepower. Book 2 adds the D6M, a D6 variant with Mauler attachment designed for Fleet fire support, with almost a third extra power than the original Romulan Falcon Mauler. Book 2 also adds the D6D – the Klingon answer to the Kzinti Drone Frigate but with more firepower, again designed to give Fleet Fire Support. The Wyn get modified Lyran Destroyers, and Kzinti Frigates to add to their Fleets.

Book 3, the latest of the series, adds the KRC, the Romulan Command Cruiser – a variant of the Klingon Command Cruiser. The Romulans also get some Klingon Tugs, suitably modified 'The Romulan Way'. We also find that Romulans modified their War Eagles for Scouting and Cargo duties, which nicely rounds out the Romulan Fleet. The other main ship addition is that of the Tholian Web Tender which releases other Tholian ships for more front line duties. The Tholian Web Tender is a modified small Freighter with all cargo replaced with APR and the addition of two Web units. Book 3 also adds a somewhat confusing Supplement to the Master Ship Chart which lists the costs of the Federation Improved ships and the new ships in the Federation Fleet. It also adds one new ship, the 'NMS' – I assume this is the new Mine Sweeper modification to the new Light Cruiser. It also gives listings of several other ships not yet presented including Gorn and Hydran Command Cruisers.

In general, all these books are of a very high standard. All three booklets fall into the 'very nice to have category'. They are not, however, essential to the game, but they do speed it up – which is what they are intended for.

	SSD Book 1	SSD Book 2	SSD Book 3
Presentation:	10	10	9
Overall:	9	9	9

Stuart Aston

Critical Mass *is a monthly science fiction and fantasy book review column, written by Dave Langford.*

SOLITAIRE

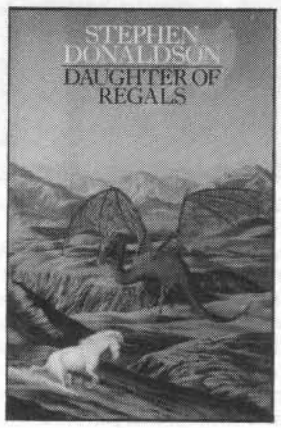
The mighty *Critical Mass* computers have analysed a representative sample of three readers' letters, to reveal the three questions most often asked:
1: 'Why did you review grotty old A but not the infinitely wonderful B?' Probably because B wasn't sent for review.
2: 'Why review hardbacks which no one can afford?' Because the publishers (whom we must humour) send them – and libraries can afford them.
3: 'Why a column on books in a games mag?' I blackmail the editors... no, because countless games have their roots in books. Thus *CM* covers the Raw Material.

You want games? Martin Gardner's *Wheels, Life and Other Mathematical Amusements* (*W H Freeman* 261pp £13.95) comprises 22 revised and extended 'Mathematical Games' columns from *Scientific American*. From halma, nim and chess to to esoteric new games like Slither, this is a goldmine of tricky ideas for tricky GMs. Want to number four 6-sided dice so that *whichever* one a sucker chooses, you can pick another which gives you a two-to-one chance of rolling higher? Try 4,4,4,4,0,0; 3,3,3,3,3,3; 2,2,2,2,6,6; 1,1,1,5,5,5. Two times out of three, each will beat the next – *and* the last will beat the first... Here too are revisions of the three famous pieces on Conway's solitaire game *Life*, which has absorbed several National Debts' worth of computer time since 1970. Fascinating.

Nearly non-fictional is *The Planiverse* by A K Dewdney [*Picador* 272pp £2.95], which builds on geometrical fantasies to invent Arde, a literally two-dimensional world with a convincing physics and ecology. Arde has no north or south: available directions are east, west, up and down, which should simplify Adventure games. Construction is difficult because a nail driven through a 2D plank automatically separates it into two; but balloons are easy since an airtight loop of string will enclose a volume (or rather, an area) of 2D gas. Dewdney even devises a workable flat steam-engine. This delightful book will be inspiring 2D game scenarios any second now.

Two 'mainstream' novels this month deal with the ultimate fantasy game of solipsism – the one inside your head. (NB – both contain naughty bits to offend younger readers' parents, and *Imagine* editors). John Fowles' *Mantissa* [*Granada* 190pp £1.95] is staged within the brain of a thinly disguised Fowles in no-holes-barred confrontation with his version of muse Erato, once in charge of love poetry but now stuck with the ghastly responsibility of inspiring the Modern Novel. Although packed with allegory about what creativity/inspiration actually *is*, the book is wonderfully, unexpectedly funny. An in-joke or so too many, but great stuff.

Similarly, Alasdair Gray's *1982, Janine* [*Cape* 347pp £8.95] happens inside the head of 'an ageing, divorced, alcoholic, insomniac supervisor of security installations who is tippling in the bedroom of a small Scottish hotel.' Sounds unpromising; but it's very witty and powerful, with the hero continually losing control over the rude fantasies he's trying to enjoy. 'I have only once had enough self-control, enough insomnia to shepherd all my fantasies up to one point and it brought on a very bad attack of hay fever.' God and several SF themes make guest appearances, and there's a chapter of the most boggling typography since early Alfred Bester. This one knocked me flat. A gentler introduction to Gray is the author-illustrated *Unlikely Stories, Mostly* [*Penguin* 276pp £4.95], an uneven but excellent collection of fantasies and parables, mostly. Best closing lines: 'For two thousand years this construction gave employment to mankind and a purpose to history. But there was a sky. We reached it. Everyone knows what happened after that.'



Graham Dunstan Martin's *The Soul Master* [*Unwin* 292pp £9.95] is nearly a fine fantasy novel, with some goodish writing and a nifty central idea. Arch-baddie Kosmion absorbs other men, building an army of puppet extensions of himself; but his flaws are multiplied with his body, and the Kosmions' perception of the world has fatal gaps – literally. I admired the ingenuity, but less so the writing: portentousness, reminders of the author's presence ('How shall I put it?' he wonders in print, breaking the narrative spell) and overuse of Significant Understatement. Flawed, but definitely worth attention – and far better than Unwin's other offering, *Frost* by Robin W Bailey [*Unicorn* 209pp £2.95], an utterly routine and derivative fantasy. 'This is Demonfang, and a warning comes with it: do not draw it idly from its silver sheath; once removed the dagger must taste blood,' etc.

Stephen R Donaldson has put away his bizarre dictionary for a seven-story collection, *Daughter of Regals* [*Collins* 349pp £8.95]. The long title story is about the best – a Melodrama of Monarchs, Mages, Regals, and Capital Letters. Its interesting system of magic – sorry, Magic – goes thus: only certain rare mythic 'Creatures' are Real and thus Magic, with common Magery invoking images of these. High-class Magic is limited to Regals, shapeshifting human/Creatures. The story concerns Chrysalis, the plain (but at least not leprous) daughter of the late Phoenix-Regal, surrounded by intrigue on the evening of her hoped but unlikely Ascension to Regal status. The plots are too neatly symmetrical and the denouement (visible 40 pages in advance) slightly fudged, but it's a Good Rattling Yarn. Other stories are less interesting: one about a chap in a *1984*-ish world turning into a unicorn is, in the *author's* words, simple-minded; another falls into the trap of fake archaism – 'Mayhap all unknowing I ate the mushroom of madness,' etc. It's a patchy collection, whose strong points are the first story (as above) and the last, 'Ser Visal's Tale', more gory melodrama with witches and an Inquisition, related with ghoulish relish. Donaldson's SF is less successful.

The Book of the River by Ian Watson [*Gollancz* 208pp £7.95] is a surprise: from the most fiendishly intellectual SF author in Britain comes a story which is straightforward, colourful, lighthearted... and the first volume of a trilogy. Heroine Yaleen is one of the riverwomen plying up and down the eastern shore of an immense river which splits the world in two, and can't be crossed owing to the sinister, gelatinous Black Current running its full length. The current only allows women to sail the river; it is in fact the vast 'worm of the world', tail in the river-source mountains and head far out at sea, collecting souls by way of rehearsal for being God. Yaleen develops an exceedingly odd relationship with the Worm. 'Outside, the world was in chaos. A giant tadpole wanted to make love to me, or something. And the roof was falling on my head. In such a moment, what could save a girl but a sense of humour?' Not exactly major Watson, but good-humoured and enormously readable.

Mute [*NEL* 441pp £2.50] is another of Piers Anthony's sprawling space operas, in which Knot, a mutant who makes people forget things, joins sexy galactic agent Finesse and numerous psychic fauna (including crabs, weasels and, so help me, fleas) to combat the possibly evil Lobos who want to take over the mighty Galactic Co-ordination Computer... Parts are exciting; parts are risible; Anthony's tortuously fair conclusion may surprise trad space-opera fans. His heart's in the right place, but he isn't half verbose and didactic. Better, anyway, than his fantasies.

Also: *Greybeard* by Brian Aldiss [*Granada* 272pp £1.95], minor classic of universal sterility reissued with a lovely cover showing ruined Oxford. *The Weird of the White Wolf* and *The Bane of the Black Sword* [both *Granada* £1.95; 155pp & 171pp] are revisions of early Moorcock works, now forming volume 3 and 5 in the definitive saga of Elric, proud possessor of the unhealthiest complexion in fantasy.

Award news! *Critical Mass's* hot tip John Sladek won the BSFA novel award for *Tik-Tok* [*Gollancz*], and a special European SF Award went to *The Science in SF* by Langford, Nicholls and Stableford [*Michael Joseph/Mermaid*] – whoopee. I am too modest to tell you about my two Hugo nominations this year...□

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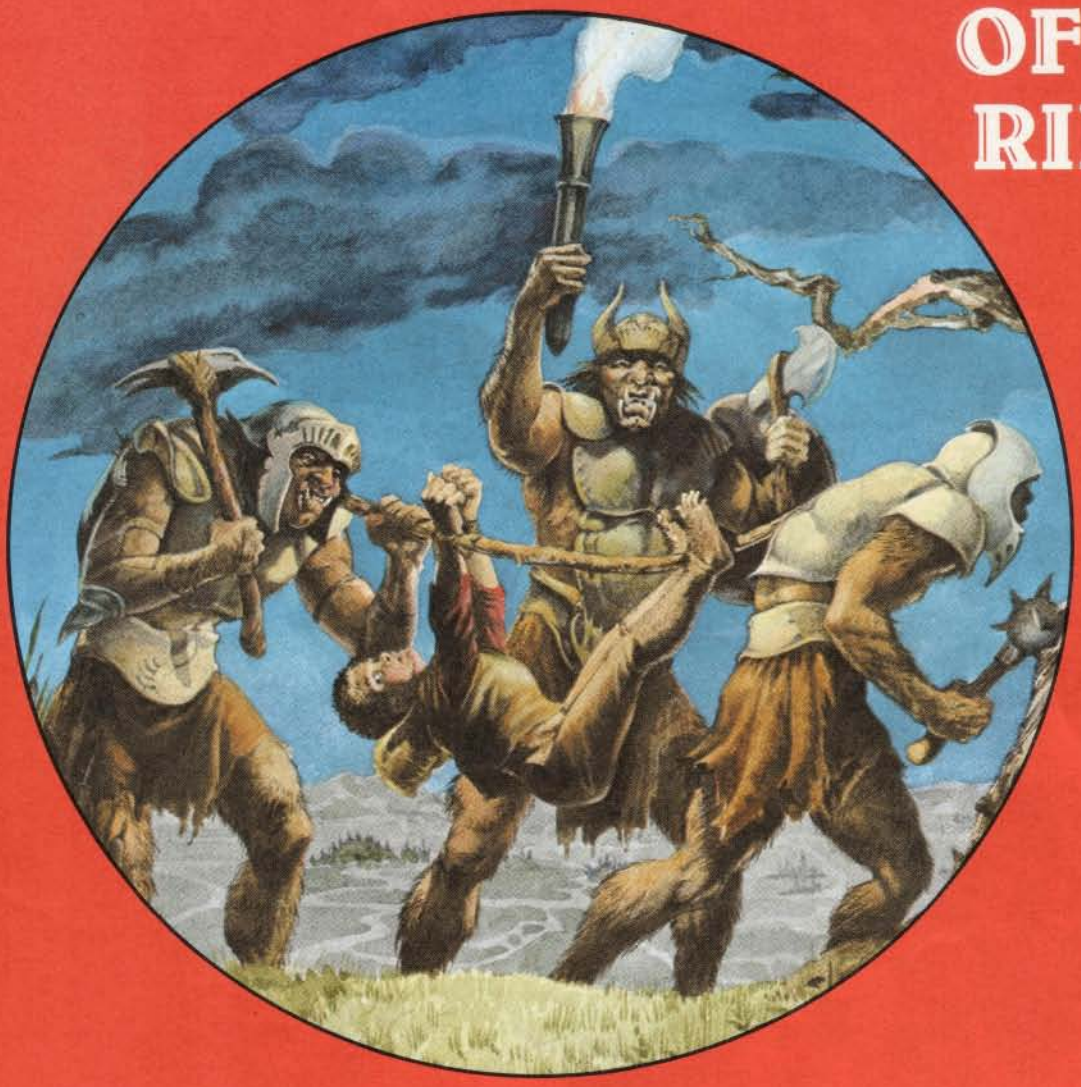

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Lost on the barren moors of Spathea after nightfall, you have little hope of surviving to see another dawn. You have trudged on through the freezing mud for hours but finally you stumble and sink to your knees, your iron will no longer a match for your weariness. You bow your head and compose yourself to meet your god. Your only regret is that you did not die in battle.

Through the closing haze of darkness you seem to see a light, and dully you turn your head to watch it approach. An old man stands before you holding a lantern aloft. When, in later years, you think back to this moment it seems that you recall vividly the look of quiet strength in his grey eyes, the sound of his cloak as the gale snaps it around his frail body...

Beckoning you to follow, he turns and walks away. Somehow you find the strength to rise and stagger after him. Holding the bobbing lantern up to guide you, he leads the way to a small cottage where a welcoming light shines from latticed windows. A few more steps would take you to the cottage door, but your fatigue is too much and you pass out. Barely conscious, you sense yourself being lifted up and carried towards the cottage. As in a dream, you abstractly wonder at the strength in the old man's arms. He takes you inside and lays you on a pallet beside the fire. Your last recollection is of thick fur blankets being drawn up around you.

It is noon before you awaken. At first you remember little, but as fragments and tatters of memory return from the previous night you are amazed to find yourself in a dusty, derelict cottage. There is no sign of your rescuer and there does not seem to have been a fire in the grate in the recent past. Outside, the bleak landscape lies bathed in cold, winter sunshine. You see smoke rising from beyond a wooded hill and head in that direction. An hour's walk then brings you to the village of Hobvale, where you quickly seek out an inn and treat yourself to an ample and warming repast. Then, sitting by the fire with a cup of mulled wine in your hand, you relate the events of the previous night to the innkeeper.

'An extraordinary tale,' he says, 'but one which I have in fact heard once or twice before, from other travellers like yourself. Some years ago an old Humakti monk called Zarafon lived in a hermitage out on the moors. Anyone who came to his door would receive shelter, and he often went out with his lantern when a sudden storm or blizzard might have caught wayfarers unawares.'

'Why, then, clearly this was he!' You are on your feet at once. 'Come, man. I am no churl. Tell me where he lives now and I shall go to thank this monk and reward him for his kindness.'

The innkeeper shakes his head and waves you back to your chair. 'Hah! I cannot think you would care to undertake the journey. He took in a stricken traveller some ten years past and then died himself when he braved the storm to fetch the man a doctor. So you see, he resides now in the fabled Hall of Humakt!'

THE UNQUIET GRAVE

The Return of the Dead in RuneQuest and FRP

by Phil Holmes

For thousands of years people have enjoyed ghost stories. A dip into the folklore and literature of any country will uncover dozens of variations on the theme. Unfortunately this rich vein of imaginative material is all too often reduced to absurdity by the need to frame everything in simple game-terms. How impoverished and inadequate the modern horrors of adventure gaming can seem when compared to the originals from which they were derived (Grendel, Dracula, the Green Knight, the Balrog *et al*).

The problem in part comes from trying to define things exactly, for this can also limit them. It would be very difficult to create anything like *Macbeth* in a standard adventure, say. Banquo's ghost would either have to be a genuine *RQ* ghost (with INT and POW, bound to remain within 10m of a particular object and banishable with *free ghost*) or a figment of Macbeth's guilt-ridden imagination (readily established by casting *detect spirit* when the ghost next shows. Storytelling allows ambiguity whereas games enforce the tedious certainty of Aristotelian logic.

I am not suggesting that creatures should not be defined at all in game-terms, however. But there should certainly be a shift away from the present rules-and-stats approach which makes it all too easy to roll hosts of uninspired random encounters. There must be a sense of (and fear of) the unknown when encountering fantastic creatures, particularly ghosts and undead. Players should not think of such things as standard, nor should they ever feel that they or anyone else in the world knows very much about them.

To help deal with the problem, here is a new term for referees to use: *revenant*. A revenant is anyone who returns from the dead – whether in physical form, as

an apparition, or as an ambiguous and undefined combination of the two. There is no one set of stats for all revenants, because they are not all of one nature – some you can fight, some you can engage in spirit combat, but many can only be dealt with by discovering their particular weaknesses. Zarafon's revenant could be thought of as a sort of 'psychic residue'. It could not harm a character, nor be harmed. It could not be pigeonholed as a *RuneQuest* spirit because it was not a conscious and reasoning entity, it was a part of this honourable man which did not fade from the world when his body died and his soul passed on. Revenants like this will appear in scenarios as a means of giving the characters clues to past events, assisting them, hindering endangering them or simply to create an eerie effect.

Revenants may be brought into existance when a person dies as a result of gross injustice, or with a task or duty still to complete. This is the nebulous and inconstant magic of the human psyche; there is no *create revenant* spell! If you left a companion to die then his revenant might pursue you with a view to evening up the score. Maybe he can only be laid to rest if you go back, find his body and give it a decent burial. Or maybe you will have to fight the revenant because it will only be satisfied by your death. Possibly the revenant will depart if you can merely fool it into thinking you are dead. Scenarios involving a revenant will thus often revolve around finding out what it wants and then accomplishing this with mininmal unpleasantness to yourself!

Revenants are a useful way of keeping powerful PCs on their toes; the characters might be able to turn Vivamort Rune Lords with their hands tied behind them, but they will just have to rely on their wits when facing a revenant which inconveniently ignores all the usual tricks for dealing with undead.

Any powers that a revenant possesses should be counterbalanced by specific vulnerabilities. These could relate to the way the revenant arose – so if a person died in a fire, his her revenant could manifest itself in a form mutilated by horrible burns, becoming able to utilise flame-related attacks and be harmed by the simple spell *extinguish*.

When you're devising a revenant, start by deciding on its 'life' history and how you're going to bring it into the scenario, and only *then* work out its stats and powers (if any) – let your imagination take the lead and make the rules run to catch up! Second, take great care in the way you play a revenant. Supposing you have a revenant which wants a character dead; it might make repeated attacks night after night, but it would not *plan* its attacks as would a human assassin. Revenants are isolated fragments of a psyche, and they lose their qualities of awe and strangeness if made to act like rational living beings.

SCENARIO OUTLINES

The High Priest of Nebr'volent

After discovering the pyramid of a wealthy Ancient, a High Priest in times long past, the characters return home with a fortune in tomb treasures. Shortly afterwards, a succession of deaths among the NPCs who accompanied them alerts the player characters to the danger they are in. The next night, one of the PCs is visited in a dream by the High Priest's revenant. In the dream, the character finds himself running, parched and weary, across the desert sands. In the moonlight, he sees an oasis and heads for it. As he cups his hands to drink, however, his relief turns to dread – for reflected in the water he sees a terrible apparition standing behind him. It is the mummified corpse of the Ancient, dressed in its priestly finery. It reaches for him with clawlike hands but he cannot move or turn to defend himself. The water in his hands turns to dust and he awakes in a cold sweat. The dream recurs every night, and each morning the character finds he is getting weaker. (In game-turns he is losing a point of CON every four nights.)

Consulting their priests, the player characters are told by the sages of Lhankor Mhy that someone must sit with the character while he sleeps and cast *spirit block* on him the moment that it seems the dream is beginning. The priests of Humakt recommend the same procedure but involving the spell *free ghost*. The latter course proves partially effective – it drives back the revenant until the next time the character goes to sleep, but the priests are charging a great deal each time they are called on to cast the spell...

The other PCs probably realise it is their turn once the haunted character is dead, so they do everything possible to keep him alive.

In desperation, (and after a gentle hint from the Referee) the character goes down to the docks and seeks out a notorious sorcerer who lives there. This fellow consults his books, charts and astrological devices and then explains that the tomb was cursed. He tells the character that he has only one hope (choose the solution which fits best into your campaign):

1. (*for long-term campaigns*). The characters must gather together the priestly regalia they stole and return them to the tomb. The problems arising from this are that they possibly do not have enough cash to buy back some of the items, or a collector who bought one of the items refuses to part with it. Once they manage to get back all of the items and set off for the tomb, the haunted character loses no more CON – but he doesn't recover the CON he's already lost until all the items are safely back and the tomb sealed.

2. (*for episodic campaigns*). The sorcerer knows of a way to help the character fight back: he must go to sleep clutching a pile of salt in his left hand and an antique jade shortsword (provided by the sorcerer) tied to his right with a silk cord. When the revenant appears behind him in his dream he is able to throw the salt up into its face and then, with its gaze momentarily averted from the pool, he is freed from his paralysis and able to turn and fight it. This is a straight 'physical' battle; no spells can be used. The character and the revenant are closely matched, and neither has armour. The revenant wields a light mace of mauve stone, so the character has an advantage in that his weapon can impale – and because of the silk cord he cannot lose his grip on it if it does. Neither weapon takes parrying damage. If he defeats it he wakes to find he is back to full health. If he doesn't defeat it then he never wakes up, and the next PC will have to pay the sorcerer for his services.

A Noble Knight

This is intended as a sub-plot to run alongside whatever 'main' adventure the characters are on at the time. A number of strange events occur over a period of several days – eg a golden hawk leading the characters to a companion who has fallen in the hills and broken his leg, a lion which silently approaches when they are lost in the mountains at night and guides them to safety etc. Mention enough of these that the players have a sense of something significant in the offing, but keep them busy enough with the main adventure that they don't have time to analyse it all. Eventually, while traversing a mountain pass, they are ambushed by trolls. Things look bad for a while until the sudden intervention of an armoured knight on horseback saves the day. The knight turns out to be an uncommunicative sort, though he does reveal his name (Helvelas) and that he worships Yelmalio. He walks with a slight limp. At the next town the characters lose him, but he meets up with them when they continue their trek into the mountains in search of whatever tomb or treasure trove they are after. Helvelas accompanies them when they enter a cavern complex infested with broos and other chaots, and several times steps into melee to save a character's life as the party fights on towards its objective. Finally, after a pitched battle in the main cavern chamber, the characters look around to find Helvelas gone. But while gathering and decontaminating the broos' treasure, they discover the corpse of a knight in the shadows under a shelf of rock to one side of the cave. Healers or sages with the party can tell that he died of a wasting infection – probably caught from the broos when they took him prisoner. His left leg was broken. Although his armour was rusted over the years, the characters can still recognise the heraldic design on the breastplate. A golden eagle on a red sun – Helvelas' coat-of-arms. His revenant has helped the players reach his body so that they can administer the proper funeral rites.

Recommended sources

Films: *The Fog; The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean; High Plains Drifter; Rashomon; Don Giovanni.*
Books: *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* by M R James; *Dracula* by B Stoker; *British Folktales and Legends* by K Briggs; *The Room in the Tower* by E F Benson; *The Bull and the Spear* by M Moorcock.
Articles scenarios: *Bloodsuckers* [*WD37*]; *Kwaidan* [*WD47*]; *More Dead Than Alive* [*WD34*]; the Graefgeard sequence in *Irilian* [*WD42*]; *Pharaoh* [*AD&D* Module I3].

Not all of these are strictly concerned with revenants, but they are valuable as inspirational material.

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*Hobbits, get out of town by sundown.

Crash Course is a regular bi-monthly Car Wars *column, written by its creator, Steve Jackson of the US.*

PUNKS IN 2034

Mohawk hair... safety pins... studded dog collars and leather jackets. There's no mistaking the punks. Imitating the pictures and styles of 50 years ago, many of the gangs of 2034 have adopted the punk look. Watch out; they're deadly.

This article is primarily intended for referees who would like to introduce punks as a new hazard in their campaigns. However, players may find it amusing to create punk duellists or cyclists as their next characters!

Types of Punk Gangs

The punk 'uniform' tells you the wearer feels alienated from society, and wants you to respect and fear him. But punks come in several different varieties... some far more dangerous than others.

Town Gangs. Usually groups of 12 to 20 youths, 16 to 20 years old, evenly divided between male and female. They are likely to be armed with bike chains, switchblades, etc, in addition to pistols and the occasional SMG. Some town gangs are vicious and aggressive, protecting their 'turf' fanatically against all comers. Other 'gangs' are nothing more than groups of teenagers playing at being fierce. Unfortunately, they all look alike. Most town punks share an interest in music (New New Wave) and other modern forms of self-expression, and some are actually intellectuals!

Cycle Gangs. A 'punk' cycle gang is no different from any other outlaw cycle group. Most of the members are male, ages ranging from 18 on up . 40 to 60 members make a respectable-sized gang, though smaller groups will often be encountered. Cycle punks often care nothing for the music, art, etc, that goes with the 'punk scene' – they just adopt the dress because it frightens and offends the citizens. They are normally encountered in ruined cities, or in the wild areas between cities, where they can prey on traffic. Like town punks, they will claim a territory – but instead of a few city blocks, they may stake out a whole county.

Society Punks. Children of well-off parents, looking for a new way to shock Mummy and Daddy... or older dilettantes seeking new thrills for their jaded tastes. Found in small groups, they may be moving in the best society circles, 'slumming' at a duellist bar, or just driving down the road in an expensive customised battlecar, looking for a fight. Unlike other punks, they will be clean! If a woman is wearing a sterling silver safety pin in her nose and her dog-collar glitters with real diamonds, that's a dead giveaway. Society punks aren't likely to be dangerous in hand-to-hand combat, but they might very well shoot you dead with a chrome-plated Luger... or chase you down the highway in a $40,000 killer car, just for kicks.

For obvious reasons, none of these three types of punks get on well with the others, and when they are thrown together, a battle is likely to develop.

Punk Vehicles and Weapons

If a Town Punk gang has any vehicles at all, they are likely to be light unarmed scooters or older lightly-armed autos. Individuals will be heavily armed. If you are using *Sunday Drivers* hand-to-hand rules, a bicycle chain hits on a roll of 5 or better, doing 1d-4 damage. A broken bottle hits on a 6 or better, doing 1d-3 damage. A switchblade or other knife costs $25, hits on a 6 or better, and does 1d-2 damage. If you are wearing body armour, though, knives and bottles will do 2 points less damage when they hit.

Some of the less vicious town punks carry Mace sprays. A spray-can will hit a cyclist or pedestrian up to 1" away on a roll of 8 or better; it has 10 charges, and costs $50. A successful hit does 1d-3 damage, and is *not* stopped by body armor. However, Mace does not kill. Its effects are similar to those of tear gas. Roll 1 die for each victim: on a 1, he is unconscious for five minutes. On a 2 through 4, he is at -6 on any To Hit roll, and can only move by crawling at 3 squares/turn. On a 5 or 6, he is at -3 to hit for the rest of that turn and the next 3 turns. Warning: Although a punk who Maces you may be unwilling to kill, he probably *will* be willing to stomp you unconscious as you crawl around on the street.

Cycle Punks will be equipped like any other cycle gang. They delight in welding jagged blades to their cycles (see *Sunday Drivers*) to allow them to sideswipe and slash pedestrians. In hand-to-hand combat, they may use heavy wrenches (hitting on a 5 or better, doing 1d-3 damage) or large sharpened screwdrivers (hitting on a 7 or better, doing 1d-1 damage). Screwdrivers, like knives, will do 2 points less damage when they strike body armour.

Society Punks may be equipped with absolutely anything. Referees should use their imaginations to devise weird and warped weapons. Some possibilities: cattle prods (hit on a 5 or better, do 1d-5 damage but stun victim, useless against body armour); throwing knives (damage like regular knives, range up to 1", hitting only on an 11 or better unless the thrower is actually skilled... in which case, they might hit on an 8 or better); stink bombs (leaves the victim smelling like a skunk); or sharp-filed *teeth* (biting in hand-to-hand combat for 1d-5 damage, hitting on a 4 or better). The decor of a society punk's vehicle should also be outlandish. Remember – these people are wealthy and *twisted*.

Getting on with Punks

When the players encounter a punk group, the referee should role-play the punks as much as possible. Remember: they are all alienated and potentially violent, each in their own way. Society Punks are looking for a thrill; Cycle Punks are looking for trouble. Town Punks may be looking for either, or both. And they will all show up, in force, when the players least expect them! The referee should reward players who handle themselves well in a surprise situation. Here are three stories about punk encounters.

Osgood Barnes found himself in a road duel late one night. He won, but his car was so badly damaged it would not drive. While he was trying to repair it, a cycle pack surrounded him. He kept his cool and asked the gang leader if his customised cycle was his own work. The cyclists, nonplussed at his lack of fear, were soon talking motors with him. They ended up helping him fix his car – and then escorted him into town.

Bobbi O'Shea stopped at a truck stop for dinner – to find that the place had been taken over by a group of punked-out rich kids. She tried to mind her own business, but they wanted some fun. They forced her to strip to her underwear and stand on a table singing the national anthem. Eventually, they let her go. What they didn't realise was that Bobbi was a truck driver – and when she got to her rig, she steamrollered their custom Jag before she left.

Three-Mile Hansen was a skilled duellist, visiting downtown Baltimore for an AADA conference. All the same, it was foolhardy of him to leave his hotel by himself and walk down to Burger Heaven to get some French fries and a shake. As he left the restaurant, he was surrounded by a dozen Mohawked teenagers, asking 'What are you doing on our turf?' With a perfectly straight face, Three-Mile replied, 'I'm going to a costume party!' He dumped the milkshake on his own head, stuck one French fry in each ear and each nostril, and continued on his way. He had out-punked the punks... and they let him go.

Punk Encounters

Surprise Party. This is the most basic encounter. The players are in a vulnerable position, and suddenly find themselves surrounded by vicious-looking punks. Their type and objective are up to the referee. Don't give in to the temptation to make it a simple blood-mad cycle gang, though. That isn't an encounter – it's a deathtrap.

Protection Service. This can work two different ways. The punks might control a parking lot on the outskirts of a zone where armed cars may not enter. They are obnoxious but reliable, and for a fee they will take good care of your car while you're gone. Or a punk gang may demand that you bribe them, or something will happen to your car someday when you're not around.

Help Wanted. A town gang asks the players for help against a cycle gang that has been invading their turf. In return, the town punks will lend a hand the next time the players' group needs some cannon-fodder in one of their own exploits. Punks can be good allies, since part of their self-image makes them act crazy and fearless.

May your safety pins never rust!□

MAN AND BEAST

Animal Cults in D&D and other Fantasy Role-Playing Games by Tony Parry and Jerry Vaughn

Introduction

A great diversity of religions are covered in the numerous worlds of Fantasy Role-Playing Games. However, one area of worship which has received little or no attention (except, perhaps, *RuneQuest*) is zoolatry – animal worship. The following article is a suggested method for introducing animal cults into campaign and if a Referee is prepared to spend some time, is easily modified. It has been developed for an *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* campaign, but it can be converted to any game system with ease.

Historically, cults of animal worship were a natural development within most pre-industrial tribes of humanity. The best known form of animal worship is totemism, which has been defined as 'an intimate relationship between a group of kindred people on one side and a species of natural objects on the other side, which are called the totems of the human group.' In true totemism this relation represents a more or less reverent attitude towards man's animal partner. More often than not the relationship with the animal not only takes on a religious format, it also becomes a part of the social life of the tribe. Usually, a tribe admired an animal for a particular quality, gradually leading to worship. After years of devoted worship by the tribe, these animals acquired 'spirits' of their own, and it is this spirit which bestows knowledge and gives power to its worshippers. As civilisation developed and expanded many of the cults disappeared as the more refined religions arose, but there are still numerous cults in existence. Examples of animal worship are still apparent in the world today. The Kwena tribe of the Tswana in South Africa has the crocodile as its animal, and in Samoa there is a tribe which worships the eel.

Requirements

Listed alongside each cult in the list of *Selected Cults* are the characteristics needed in order to become a member of that cult. Each of these is listed in order of importance, and the scores in these characteristics will help to determine the initiate's advancement in the cult hierarchy. Alignment also plays an important role in the candidate's advancement; the nearer the person's alignment is to neutrality, the better his chance of successful advancement is.

Organisation

Cult organisation is based on much the same lines as a clerical order in *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, with only the elite reaching the cult's equivalent of high priest.

Initiation

Initiation into a cult can be an arduous task. An initiation test must be taken by each potential candidate. For this test the candidate is left at night, naked, alone and unarmed in an area where the cult animal is known to frequent – such as a waterhole or gametrail. During this test the candidate will be visited by the cult's animal 'spirit'. A circle of protective force will surround the candidate's material body, whilst the actual test takes place on the *Astral Plane*. During the test the candidate will be shown the joys of belonging to that particular cult, amongst other things. If the candidate is considered acceptable for membership he will be given his first animal talisman (qv). However, if rejected there is a possibility that the candidate will be killed, especially if the cult animal is carnivorous. Normally the candidate will not remember anything about the cult whatsoever if rejected. The candidate will be refused admission into the cult if he possesses some ulterior motive, such as joining to gain specific information on a certain item or to steal a cult artifact.

Selected Cults

Cult Class	*Individual Cult*	*Cult Requisites*	*Cult Talisman*
Ape	Gorilla	Strength Constitution	Tooth
Bear	Brown	Strength Constitution	Tooth
	Polar	Strength Constitution	Tooth
Bird	Eagle	Dexterity Strength	Talon
	Vulture	Strength Dexterity	Talon
Boar	Boar	Strength Dexterity	Tusk
	Warthog	Strength Dexterity	Tusk
Cat	Lion	Strength Dexterity	Tooth
	Panther	Dexterity Strength	Tooth
	Puma	Dexterity Intelligence	Tooth
	Tiger	Strength Dexterity	Tooth
Deer	Deer	Dexterity Intelligence	Antler
	Antelope	Dexterity Intelligence	Horn
Dog	Coyote	Dexterity Intelligence	Tooth
	Fox	Intelligence Dexterity	Brush
	Wolf	Strength Constitution	Tooth
Reptile	Alligator	Strength Dexterity	Tooth
	Crocodile	Strength Dexterity	Tooth
	Snake	Dexterity Charisma	Fang

Notes: The Cult Requisites are listed in order of primary importance. The first is the Prime Requisite Factor, which must be above 12 for a character to be eligible for membership. The second is the Secondary Requisite Factor which must be above 9 for a character to be eligible for membership. These two figures are also used in the computation of the member's chance of advancement and also of initiation.

Advancement

In order for an initiate to advance in the cult hierarchy he must amass experience points equal to that of a cleric of equivalent level and also undertake a further test of worthiness. The follwoing formula is used in calculating the chance of a candidate becoming an initiate, and of advancing a level in the cult.

Success: Base Chance + (Candidate's Requisite Factor +/- Alignment Factor) – Cult Level.

Base Chance: 30%

Candidate's Requisite Factor: +5% per point over 12 (Prime Requisite Factor), +1% per point over 15 (Secondary Requisite Factor).

Alignment Factor: -10% (Lawful good, Lawful evil, Chaotic good, Chaotic evil), -5% (Neutral good, Neutral evil), +/- 0% (Lawful neutral, Chaotic neutral), +5% (True neutral).

Cult Level: -5% per level after level II

For example: Bruno, a Chaotic good fighter with 17 Strength and 16 Constitution, wants to advance from cult level III to cult level IV in a bear cult.

Success Chance: 30% (Base Chance) + 26% (Candidate's Requisite Factor) -10% (Alignment Factor) -10% (Cult Level). = 36% chance of successful advancement.

Animal Talismans

Each time a cult member advances in the hierarchy, his animal talisman increases in potency. This talisman is the member's symbol of membership and is also the medium through which the member gains power. Each talisman possesses the powers of its level and of those below it.

Cult Level	*Power*
I	Communicate
II	Detect
III	Locate
IV	Hold
V	Charm
VI	Command
VII	Summon
VIII	Assume Animal Form
IX	Call Guardian Spirit

Explanations

Communicate: The bearer can talk with the animals associated with that particular cult. Since all cult rituals and proceedings are conducted in the animal tongue it is an essential part of membership.

Detect: Enables the bearer to detect the presence and number of the cult animal within a 180' radius.

Locate: The bearer can locate up to three particular animals of the cult within a ¾ mile radius.

Hold: This particular ability allows the member to keep at bay 1-4 cult animals for 1-6 hours, if, for any particular reason, they are angry with him.

Charm: Akin to the druidic spell *charm person or mammal*, it allows the wearer to befriend 1-3 cult animals, so long as he wears his talisman. The same restrictions apply here as with *charm person or mammal*.

Command: A stronger version of *charm*, allowing the wearer to command 1-2 cult animals for up to (Charisma) weeks.

Summon: Bearer can summon up to three cult animals within a 2 mile radius and if the terrain is correct.

Assume Animal Form: Like the druidic ability the bearer can assume the shape of the cult animal for a duration of (10+ Constitution) hours. When in animal form all abilities, except mind and hits are as the animal. However, the animal instincts also apply. The shapechanger is not affected by situations of extreme stress or the phases, as lycanthropes are. The animal form the cultist assumes is unusually large and powerful. If killed in changed form the cultist will revert to his normal form. Human shape can be re-assumed at any time prior to the greatest duration. The use of this power is limited to once every seven days.

Call Guardian Spirit: This unique ability is usable once every three months. The Guardian Spirit is the physical manifestation of the spiritual being. It is a more powerful representation of the cult's animal. The Guardian Spirit cannot be harmed by normal weapons and is able to pass through material objects, because of its partial existence on the *Astral Plane*. The manifestation instils in all non-cult members *fear*, as the magic-user spell, and great respect in all cult members. The Guardian Spirit possesses powers as if it held a Talisman of level VII. In addition all animals of its Cult Class (qv) cannot attack it and will show reverence or fear.

Cult Benefits and Restrictions

1. When someone becomes an initiate in a cult he will become a respected member of the society in which the animal is worshipped.
2. Clerics, paladins and monks are unable to join a cult.
3. The higher a member advances in a cult, the greater his responsibilities. Members of cult levels I-VII must attend rituals at least once a month, those of cult levels VIII-IX must attend all rituals. Failure to attend will result in the confiscation of the animal talisman and eventually in expulsion from the cult.
4. If someone is refused entry into one cult he can try to become a member of another, but will never be accepted into the first cult, no matter where he tries.

Uses

There are many ways in which these cults could be introduced into a scenario or campaign.

Players may come across some cultists and incur their wrath in some way (raiding one of their settlements or crossing a cult member.) This allows the referee to run some interesting adventures involving summoned cult animals and 'weremen' etc (like those horror stories from the 1920's and 1930's).

Player characters may become involved with one of these cults and attempt to join one; this could be especially important for a druid character. In fact, some GMs may like to make the animal cults an essential part of the druid class in their campaign.

Remember, it is only a suggestion – modify and make use of it as you will.□

A four-part fantasy adventure in which you are the hero. If you did not complete last issue's adventure or are playing for the first time, you will now need to roll up a character – go to Getting Started, *below. If you have successfully completed last issue's adventure go to* 1.

THE CASTLE OF LOST SOULS

Part Four: The Evil Eye
by Dave Morris and Yve Newnham

GETTING STARTED
This is an adventure like the well-known *Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks*. Your fate will be determined by the decisions you make – along with a little luck. Read only those numbered paragraphs you are sent to in the text – reading any out of turn may ruin the adventure. You begin by determining your *characteristics*.

1. Roll one die. Add 5 to this number. The total is your *Fighting Prowess*. The higher the score, the better you are at swordplay etc.
2. Roll two dice and add 10. This is your *Constitution*. A high score enables you to resist hardship, disease and poison, and gives you the strength to fight on even when badly wounded.
3. Roll one die and add 5. This is your *Cleverness* – how fast you can think and act in an emergency. Your *Cleverness* helps when you are trying to jump clear of a hidden trapdoor, hide from a pursuer and so on.
4. Roll one die and add 3. Add 1 more if your *Fighting Prowess* is 7 or less. Add 1 if your *Constitution* is 14 or less. This is your *Magical Fortitude*. The higher it is, the better chance you have of resisting the effects of hostile sorcery.

What you have just done is called *rolling up a character*. Note down your scores in each characteristic on the *Adventure Record*.

Adventure Record

Characteristic	*Initial Score*	*Current Score*
Fighting Prowess		
Constitution		
Cleverness		
Magical Fortitude		
Honour		

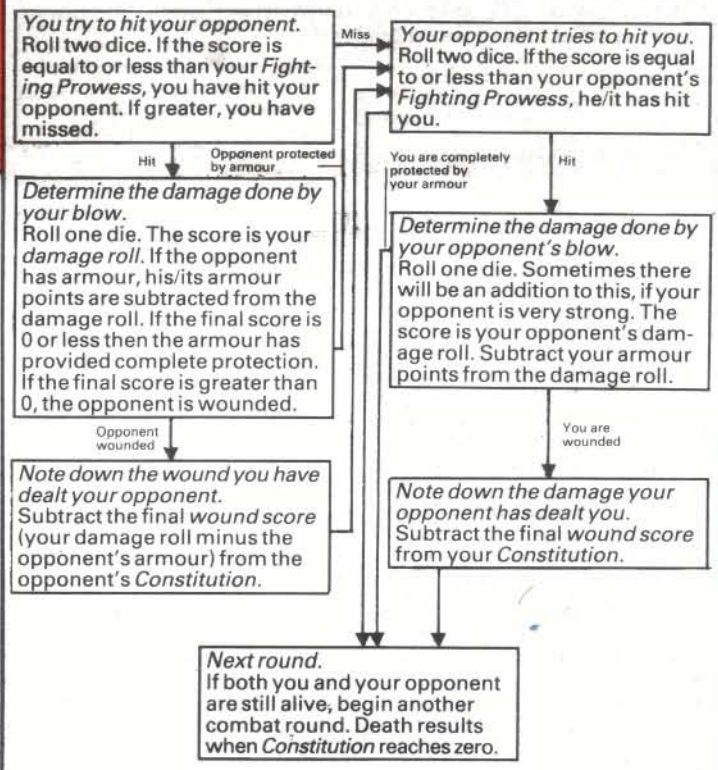
Armour

Gold Pieces

Potions

Other

Combat
When you have to fight, you will be told the opponent's *Fighting Prowess, Constitution* and armour. Note these down before starting.
A fight consists of a number of *combat rounds*. During each round, both you and your opponent get to strike at one another. The sequence for each combat round is as follows:



Keeping Track of Your Characteristics
Keep careful note of your characteristics on your Adventure Record. Sometimes these characteristics, especially *Constitution* will change.

Armour
The armour you are wearing reduces the damage you take from a blow. Your opponents will often have armour as well. In the case of monsters, this usually represents their tough skin rather than being actual armour. 1-point armour is leather (or thick hide); 2-point is chainmail (or horny scales, like a dragon's). You start your adventure with chainmail armour, which will absorb 2 points from the damage of any blow that strikes you. Note this down on your Adventure Record.

Equipment
Note down your equipment on the Adventure Record. As well as the chainmail, you have a sword, a dagger, a bow and six arrows, a backpack for holding treasure, a *Potion of Healing* (see below), a lantern, flint, tinder, 40 gold pieces, magical boots, a little girl's teardrop, a fragment of a chivalrous knight's armour, a four leaf clover, a saint's ashes, a crystal ball, and a nun's hair. Whenever you pick something up during the adventure, note it down on the adventure record.

The Potion of Healing
You start with a flask containing one dose of this potion. When you drink it (which you can do at any time except during a combat), roll one die and add 3. This is the number of *Constitution* points you recover. It cannot, however, increase *Constitution* above its initial score.

Honour
The more chivalrously you behave during the adventure, the more *Honour* you will acquire. Conversely, you lose *Honour* by behaving in an underhand fashion. You begin with 7 points of *Honour*.

The Adventure
You are the Champion of the Greengosh family, chosen by its head, Hogron. He hired you to rescue his father's soul, captured and taken to the castle of the demon, Slank. To do this Hogron told you that you needed some magical boots, a teardrop, a fragment of armour from the most chivalrous knight, a four leaf clover, the ashes of a saint and the hair of a nun. All these items you have collected in your journeys and have already undergone many hardships to reach the castle of Slank. Go to **1**.

1: You stand at the very threshold of the Castle of Lost Souls. The mists of the swamp seem to shrink away from it. Its presence is awesome – you cannot grasp any sense of its size; it seems endless, eternal... The walls tower dizzyingly above you into the glowering, dull red sky. Perhaps in the castle's unreal and inhuman architecture you glean something of the twisted mind of its master, Slank. You notice a twinkling light. A solitary candle burns in one of the windows – to the left of the doorway, apparently on the first floor. All else is shrouded in darkness.

The castle is not guarded; none of the tortured souls that enter ever leaves. With weapon in hand you advance slowly across the drawbridge. You reach out – does your hand tremble just a little now? – and push open the heavy mahogany door. Turn to **12**.

2: After a short distance the corridor turns to the right. At the corner there is a low, fire-blackened door with a pewter handle. If you wish to open the door, turn to **73**. If you wish to ignore it and carry on, turn to **6**.

3: You dip your hand into the pool and take the stone bottle. Will you remove the stopper from it? If so, turn to **63**. If not, note it down and turn to **44**.

4: Your eyes are off him for only a moment as you reach for your backpack, but when you look again he is no longer there. Strange and inexplicable things are obviously commonplace here – you will have to be vigilant. You turn back; go to **41**.

5: You double up in sudden and intense agony. For long minutes you crouch there by the fire, incapacitated by the terrible pain. At last you are able to rise, but you have permanently lost a point from your Initial *Constitution*. You can now open the larder (turn to **22**) or go through to the next room (turn to **58**).

6: A little further along the corridor you come to a large oak portal with an iron latch in the shape of a bat. You push it open and survey the room beyond. Directly opposite is a high arch leading from the room. Staring down from above this arch is a rather noxious bas relief of a sneering inhuman face.

A low whimpering draws your attention to the occupant of the room – presumably one of the poor souls Slank torments for his pleasure. She is a slender woman with light brown hair, her wrists bound by leather thongs to a wooden beam above her head. Her feet rest on a red-hot metal plate. You can see the sick ingenuity of the arrangement – she is able to lift her legs clear of the plate, but eventually her arms ache so much that she has to stand on it again and get burned. She sees you and starts pleading for you to release her. If you do, turn to **53**. If not, turn to **37**.

7: Did you leave either the clover or the teardrop on Slank's mask? If so, turn to **75**. If not, turn to **43**.

8: You could try to heat the knife using your lantern, which might help to cut the ice. If you do that, turn to **86**. If you have a jar of salt, go to **55**.

9: You find a twisting flight of steps leading up out of the dungeon. To your immense relief, the door at the top is not locked and you emerge into the candlelit entrance hall. You decide to try the stairs – turn to **34**.

10: It is exhausting work, but you eventually manage to dig the mask out of the ice. Turn to **35**.

11: The rauchwurm dissipates into the smoke from which it formed. You reach out and grasp the golden hilt of the sword you have fought for. Certainly it is a worthy prize: as you swing it through the air it follows your intentions with an almost sentient precision. You add 1 to your *Fighting Prowess* while fighting with this weapon. Seeing nothing else of value in the room, you decide to leave – and you are incidentally saved from electrocution a second time by your magic Wristband. Turn to **6**.

12: You step into a shadowy, cloistered hallway that reeks of funeral incense. All is bathed in the guttering, smoky light of myriad black candles. A wide staircase leads up to the first floor. Over to one side of the hallway you see double doors carved with arabesque designs. Will you open the doors (turn to **49**), or proceed up the stairs (turn to **34**)?

13: You walk along a short tunnel and enter a circular room with a pool in the middle. There is one other exit from the room – a door to your left. You can go back and take one of the other doors – either the one with the copper plaque (turn to **88**) or the one with the bronze plaque (turn to **70**) – or you can cross the room (turn to **83**).

14: You leave the newt's eye in the eyeslit of the demon mask. There seems to be nothing else you can do here, so you cross the icy floor to the archway and step through. Turn to **18**.

15: You gulp back the magic potion. For the duration of your fight with the Undine, you can strike three times in every combat round. Turn to **50**.

16: Before you can go further you need a source of light. Will you take down the pine torch (turn to **25**), or would you prefer to light your lantern (turn to **67**)?

17: You can use the crystal ball (turn to **66**) or the three strange silver coins (turn to **24**). If you have neither of these, or decide not to use them, turn back to **37** and open one of the doors.

18: You are at the foot of a rough stone stairway that winds up around the walls of a narrow, circular tower. Staring into the gloom, you discern a crimson glow far above. You climb up and up – hundreds of feet, it seems. At last you reach the top of the tower. There is only one door off the landing – a heavy iron portal with a glowing, gloating red face inscribed into it. It swings back as you approach and you pass through into what must be the topmost chamber of the tower. Outside you can see massive, ponderous storm clouds against the starless night sky. There is a curtained alcove on the other side of the chamber. As you cross over to it, a sibilant voice seems to speak from within you, extolling the virtues of an eternity in service to the demon. If you have any *Honour*, try to roll equal to or less than your *Honour* score on two dice. If you succeed, turn to **46**; if you fail, turn to **27**. If you don't have any *Honour*, turn to **74**.

19: Chuckling humourlessly, he closes his grip on you. You cannot move. 'Quite wrong,' he says. 'Clearly your riddling skills leave much to be desired, but perhaps they will improve when you've been a guest at my castle for an eternity or two!' By his duplicity, the archfiend Slank has captured you. You are his prisoner forever, and the adventure ends here.

20: Do you have the ashes of a saint? If so, you scatter these over the demon's body – turn to **89**. If you don't have any ashes, turn to **84**.

21: He reaches into a pouch at his belt and produces a number of wicked-looking devices. 'Pilliwinks is a game played with the fingers,' he explains as he fixes the thumbscrews onto you. Paralysing pain shoots up your arms. Through waves of agony you see the figure before you dissolve and alter – he is no longer an old man, but a tall figure clad in black robes.

'A generous soul is a lost soul,' says Slank with a demonic smile. 'Allow me to welcome you as my castle's latest guest.'

Your adventure has ended, but the torment is just beginning...

22: Human torsos dripping with gore hang on rusted meathooks along the larder walls. You can see maggots crawling on some of them. Slank obviously likes game adventurers. Ranged on wooden shelves you can see a number of jars and bottles. You lean closer to read the faded labels; they contain all manner of ingredients. There is a jar of newt's eyes, another of frog's toes, one contains a pickled dog's tongue and the next holds fillet of fen snake. One bottle has no label, but its contents are unmistakeably lizard legs. Among the more normal ingredients, you notice red pepper, parsley and salt. You can take up to three jars if you wish – note them down on your Adventure Record. Feeling your gorge rise at the sight and stench of the demon's awful larder you continue on your way (turn to **58**).

23: 'Oh. Well, at least you must have the ashes of a saint'? If you do, turn to **72**. If not, turn to **33**. (Gorbran was *not* a saint, by the way, if you met him in last issue's adventure.)▷

24: You toss the three coins down on the floor in front of you. One lands with the unicorn's head uppermost, the other two with the serpent's head. Does that give you any ideas? You can retrieve the coins if you wish, then turn back to **37** and choose which door to open.

25: As you take the torch from the bracket, you set off a trap! A hatch you had carelessly failed to notice opens beneath you and you plummet some 13 feet onto a cold stone floor. Somewhat dazed, you stagger to your feet and look around. In the bleary light and choking dust you can just make out a figure chained to the wall. As you approach with the torch you see he is an old man with a clouded, sightless right eye.

'I am Vimbol Greengosh,' he tells you. 'Are you the champion my sons have sent to rescue me? If so, help me out of these chains and your reward will exceed anything you can imagine.'

If you wish to do as he asks, turn to **60**. If you would rather leave him chained up, turn to **9**.

26: You pull the folds of the rug around you. It is comfortably warm and you are glad you had the foresight to bring it. Will you now try to get at the mask (turn to **77**), or leave through the archway (turn to **18**)?

27: Slank is trying to convince you to serve him. You dimly realize that he is probably using magic, but you cannot resist. You have always been the sort of halfheartedly unethical person who is easily led by those of strongly good or evil character. Slank is very definitely in the latter category. He steps from the alcove and you feel the last of your will desert you as you kneel before him. Now and forever, you are his cringing thrall...

28: You pound the door with your fist, producing a booming echo. After a few moments a small panel is slid back and the occupant of the room examines you. You see his eyes alight on the talisman Hogron gave you; immediately he gives a cry of delight and starts to clear his barricade from the other side of the door. You wait nervously in the passage, praying that all this noise won't alert the demon. Finally the door opens and the old man ushers you in. The place is a vast, vaulted library with books and pamphlets lining every inch of the walls from floor to ceiling.

'You've come at last!' says the old man, crying with joy. 'I knew my lads wouldn't let me down – I'm Vimbol Greengosh, of course.' He shows you to a leather armchair by the fireplace and thrusts a glass of tawny port wine into your hand. Obviously, although Slank's prisoner, he is not completely without creature comforts. He takes down a musty tome and opens it at a chapter headed *Dealing With Demons*. 'Now listen carefully, for there isn't much time. You should have a number of items, and this book describes how each item will affect Slank. Firstly, a four leaf clover will have much the same effect on him as a crucifix has on a vampire – he won't want to touch it or go anywhere near it. Second, if you throw my daughter's teardrop into his left eye you'll blind him completely, as I've already managed to destroy his right eye. Now, do you have the fragment of knight's armour and the hair of a nun?

If you have both these items turn to **64**. If not, turn to **23**.

29: Somehow you manage to drag yourself the last few yards and slump through the archway. The coldness is presumably a magical effect restricted to the last room, for after a few minutes you stop shivering. Rubbing the circulation back into your sword-hand, you look around you. Turn to **18**.

30: 'That's right!' he says, his tone of surprise veiling a slight irritation. 'I didn't expect you to get that one. All the same, I don't see how you could have cheated, so I suppose I'll have to let you go for now...' Suddenly he spits in your face! You blink and rub your eyes, and when you look again he is nowhere to be seen. You go back to the top of the stairs and try the other direction. Turn to **41**.

31: As Slank flails about blindly, you raise your bow and shoot the specially prepared arrow straight into his evil heart. He falls dead at your feet. Turn to **20**.

32: You descend a flight of stairs into what seems to be a pillared ballroom with a floor of polished white marble. There is a shadowed archway across on the other side of the room. However, as you walk warily towards this, you make a startling discovery – the floor underfoot is not marble at all, but solid ice. Several inches below you, frozen in the ice, you can see a bizarre demonic mask. As you peer down at this you suddenly realize how cold the room is getting. Your hands are turning blue and your teeth chatter uncontrollably. Do you have a bearskin rug? If so, turn to **26**. If not, turn to **59**.

33: Vimbol shrugs. 'Too bad. Still, maybe you can finish Slank off anyway – you'll just need to be that much more careful. Now, I wish you good luck.' He shows you to the library door and the two of you shake hands. As you continue along the corridor you can hear him replacing the barricade on the other side of the door. Turn to **2**.

34: You climb up to the first floor landing. From here you can go left (turn to **41**) or right (turn to **61**).

35: The mask is of black-laquered wood decorated with silver, and could be a fanciful representation of a demon's face. You have seen its like at several masquerade parties, although never crafted with such chilling effectiveness as this. Curiously, the mask has only one eye – the left – and that has a quartz lens set into it. Will you touch the mask (turn to **47**), take out one of your items (turn to **79**), or depart through the dark archway (turn to **18**)?

36: You pour a little of the oil from your lantern onto the surface of the pool, thereby calming the troubled waters. The Undine immediately becomes quiescent and sinks back into the pool. You cautiously dip your hand into the still water to take the stone bottle. If you wish to unstopper this now, turn to **63**. If not, note it down on your Adventure Record and turn to **44**.

37: After a brief, uneasy glance at the bas relief, you pass through the arch and make your way along a narrow, twisting passage that leads deep into the heart of the castle. You pass through a succession of gloomy chambers and finally climb a worn flight of steps to a landing where three doors face you. Each of the doors bears a plaque with an inscription on it:

Copper plaque – *To slay me you must pass through this door.*
Bronze plaque – *You should not pass through this door.*
Lead plaque – *The correct path is not beyond the copper-plaquered door.*

You grit your teeth. The demon is obviously toying with you. His mistake. You could open one of the doors – the door with the copper plaque (turn to **88**), the one with the bronze plaque (turn to **70**) or the one with lead plaque (turn to **13**). Or you could take an item from your backpack (turn to **17**).

38: You enter a large, low-ceilinged room with no other doorways. In the centre of the room stands a tall man in voluminous robes. He wears a patch over his right eye and stands by a pool of blood which is flowing from a gash in his arm. If you want to talk to him, turn to **82**. If you want to take an item from your backpack, turn to **4**.

39: You lift the ladle and sip a little of the mixture. Roll five dice – if you score equal to or less than your *Constitution*, turn to **5**. If you score greater than your *Constitution*, turn to **68**.

40: You stand over the fallen body for several minutes, half expecting Slank to rise a second time, and ready to renew the battle at once if he does. But he used the last of his sorcerous power against you; this time he stays dead. Turn to **89**.

41: You advance along a narrow corridor illuminated by the amber glow of oil lamps. Shortly you come to a door in the left-hand wall. You can try the door (turn to **51**) or continue on along the corridor (turn to **2**).

42: Do you have the *Wristband of Lightning*? If so, turn to **62**. If not, an electrical discharge as you try to step into the alcove hurls you back across the room. Deduct 4 points from you *Constitution*; if you are still alive you decide to leave and continue along the corridor – turn to **6**.

43: Smiling viciously, Slank steps from the alcove and stands before you, huge and awesome and *casting no shadow*. You hear the rumble of the approaching storm, drowned out by Slank's laughter. His surcoat and boots and vambraces are as black as the night and trimmed with silver; his pale skin has a translucent gleam. At first glance the face might almost be considered handsome – but then you see the clouded, sightless right eye, the face around it scarred and mutilated by terrible burns. The good eye shines with an awful, corrupt light and the expression twisting those fine features is one of utter evil.

Slank holds a lacquered mask in his left hand, and he brings this

up now to cover his face. The mask has a quartz lens which shields his good eye, so even if you have the teardrop you cannot use it. Neither is there time to draw your bow – you must fight him. Turn to **48**.

44: Will you leave the circular room through the door to your left (turn to **58**), or will you return to the landing and open the door with the copper plaque (turn to **88**) or the door with the bronze plaque (turn to **70**)?

45: Which of the following will you use against the Undine? The *Ring of Light* (turn to **80**); the *Potion of Dazzling Speed* (turn to **15**); your lantern (turn to **36**). If you decide not to try any of these, turn to **50**.

46: Slank is using his foul magic to try and persuade you to serve him, but no demon will ever corrupt an honourable and undaunting spirit like yours. Grimly, you push the curtain aside. Turn to **7**.

47: The mask is so cold that it burns your fingers. You try to wrap it in your cloak, but you can still feel the unnatural chill of it sapping your body heat. You cannot take it with you, then. Will you take an item from your backpack (turn to **79**), or leave the room (turn to **18**)?

48: Slank advances on you with a panther's grace, his robes fluttering in the breeze. There is a cold, damp, earthy smell like a waiting grave. The talons of his right hand are almost a cubit long; they sparkle like crystal and are razor-sharp.

Slank: *Fighting Prowess*: 12; *Constitution*: 23; 3-pt armour.

If you manage to defeat him, turn to **20**.

49: Beyond the double doors you see a dimly lit room. A pine torch burns in a bracket on the wall. The same heavy incense you noticed before lingers here. At the far end of the room you can just make out a darkened archway. There is blackness beyond. Will you return to the hallway and go upstairs (turn to **34**), or cross the room to the archway (turn to **16**)?

50: You are fighting an Undine, or Water Elemental. Every time you hit it you must roll your *Magical Fortitude* or less on two dice – failure to do this means you lose 1 point from your *Fighting Prowess*, down to a minimum of 4.

Undine: *Fighting Prowess*: 6; *Constitution*: 5; No armour.

If you win, turn to **3**.

51: The door seems to be to be barred or barricaded shut. Will you knock (turn to **28**), or carry on to the end of the corridor (turn to **2**)?

52: The correct answer is 'peerless'. If you answered this, turn to **30**. If you answered anything else, turn to **19**.

53: You slice through her bonds with your knife and carry her over to a corner of the room where you gently set her down. Gain 1 point of *Honour* for your charitable action. The woman nurses her blistered feet for a while, then looks up at you and speaks. 'I was a witch, and I sold my soul to the demon in return for knowledge and occult power. For helping me, I will give you what little aid I can.' She puts a catskin pouch around your neck – increase your *Magical Fortitude* by 1 above its Initial level for as long as you wear this. She also gives you three silver coins. 'These may show you the way,' she murmurs cryptically. Each has a unicorn's head on one face and a serpent's head with a forked tongue on the other. You are about to question her further when you see that she has passed out. You moisten her lips with a little wine, then pocket the coins and leave. Turn to **37**.

54: Curse the luck! Your knife breaks. If you didn't have a sword then you are now without any weapon at all, and must subtract 2 from your damage rolls from now on until you find one. If you do have a sword, you are certainly not going to risk breaking its blade on the ice. You decide to leave the damned mask where it is and go through the archway. Turn to **18**.

55: By pouring salt over the ice you lower its freezing point; it starts to melt, and you now have little difficulty in digging down to the mask with your knife. Turn to **35**.

56: Before continuing on your way, you could take either the poleaxe or the now-lifeless rug. You cannot take both because they are rather bulky items. You then proceed to the double doors at the end of the room. Turn to **32**.

57: You leave the teardrop in the mask's one eye and then cross the room to the archway. Cross the tear off your Adventure Record. Turn to **18**.

58: You enter a long, oak-beamed dining hall with fading portraits high up on the walls. Ignoring two smaller doorways, you make your way along the table towards the double doors at the far end of the room. You pass a wide stone hearth where a raging log fire crackles and spits. Over the hearth hangs a great poleaxe and on the floor in front of it there is a fine, white bearskin rug. You can either go over to the hearth (turn to **76**) or carry on to the double doors (turn to **32**).

59: You panic and run for the archway, but your feet slip on the ice and you scramble frantically on all fours. Roll four dice, attempting to score equal to or less than your *Constitution*. If you succeed, turn to **29**. If you fail, turn to **65**.

60: You have no trouble in breaking the rusty manacles from his wrists. 'What a generous soul you are!' he exclaims, favouring you with a rather peculiar smile. 'How about a game of pilliwinks?' Will you accept his offer (turn to **21**), or decline to play (turn to **71**)?

61: You walk along a short corridor and come to a low door. If you want to go through this door, turn to **38**; if you want to turn back and go the other way, turn to **41**.

62: An incandescent bolt arcs across the alcove entrance as you step through it, but the energy is absorbed by your *Wristband* and you are unharmed. The sword hangs on the wall before you. The rubies glitter and the metal gleams in the wan light of the two braziers to either side of the alcove. As you reach for the sword, thick smoke billows up from these braziers and coagulates into a dark serpentine form in the air above your head. With a shock, you realize this smoke-creature is alive and intent on fighting you!

Rauchwurm: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 8; No armour.

If you win, turn to **11**.

63: An emerald vapour issues from the open neck of the bottle. When it clears you find a tall figure with green skin standing before you. Arms folded across his barrel-like chest, he bows low. 'Greetings, master!' he booms. 'I am Ghilbee, and for releasing me I can grant you skill, stamina or knowledge.' If you choose skill, he will restore your *Fighting Prowess* to its Initial level. If you choose stamina, he will restore 4 points of your *Constitution*. If you choose knowledge, he gives you a clue to defeating Slank (turn to **69** to find out what it is). After performing whichever of these services you request, he vanishes. Turn to **44**.

64: Following instructions in his book, Vimbol affixes the sliver of armour to the point of one of your arrows. He then restrings your bow using the nun's hair. 'This will kill Slank at once if you shoot him through the heart,' he explains. 'Lastly, then, do you have the ashes of a saint?'

If you do, turn to **72**. If not, turn to **33**. (Incidentally, if you did last issue's adventure and burnt Gorbran thinking he was a saint, you were wrong.)

65: You are only a few yards from the archway, but the terrible cold numbs your limbs and you slump down on the icy floor. You cannot feel any pain, but you realize you are dying. You note with dispassionate wonder the curious sighing sound your breath makes as it freezes on the air. Strangely calm, you surrender to the eternal dark...

66: The doors do not look any different when viewed through the crystal ball. Turn back to **37** and think again.

67: Holding up your lantern, you cross over to the archway – only to find that the passage beyond ends in a blank wall after only a few yards. You search in vain for a secret panel, but you are finally forced to accept that it is a dead end. Puzzled, you return to the hallway and try the stairs. Turn to **34**.

68: The effect of the brew hits you like a poleaxe and you fall to the floor. This is the favourite soup of the demon, but to any mortal it is a virulent poison. The life ebbs from your pain-wracked body. Your quest has ended in failure.

69: Before he disappeared, the genie told you cryptically that 'the eyes have it' and suggested that you go back to the landing and try another of the doors. Turn to **44**. ▷

70: You open the door into what seems to be a kitchen. It is full of smoke and steam and is almost unbearably hot. Looking around, you see a cauldron bubbling over the roaring fire and a small doorway to one side that presumably leads to the larder. Directly across the kitchen from where you entered is a copper-bound door stamped with odd runic designs. You can look in the larder (turn to **22**), look in the cauldron (turn to **85**) or go to the next room (turn to **58**).

71: He shrugs and seems to fade away into the shadows. You are alone. Go to **9**.

72: 'Excellent. After killing Slank you must scatter the ashes over his body. Now, I wish you good luck.' You shake hands before taking your leave of him and continuing along the corridor. Behind you, you hear pushing the library furniture back against the door. Turn to **2**.

73: The room consists of a hexagonal main chamber with a large alcove off the far end. Hanging on the wall in the alcove you can see a gilded longsword decorated with rubies. As you step closer, you notice an acrid smell in the room and a blue-white flickering across the alcove entrance. Will you step into the alcove (turn to **42**), or continue along the corridor (turn to **6**)?

74: You are one of the most disreputable and unprincipled degenerates of all time. Slank is trying to convince you to become his servant, but no way are you going to take orders from a wimp like him! You sneer and rip down the curtain. Turn to **7**.

75: Smiling viciously, Slank steps from the alcove and towers over you in his robes as black as night. At first glance his face might almost be considered handsome – but then you see the clouded, sightless right eye, the face around it scarred and mutilated by terrible burns. The other eye shines with an awful, corrupt light, and the expression twisting those fine features is one of utter and inhuman evil. From outside the tower comes the rumble of distant thunder, and Slank answers it with triumphant laughter.

If you have Perterra Greengosh's teardrop, you can cast it into his eye – turn to **87**. If you don't have this item, you must fight him – turn to **48**.

76: As you step forwards, the rug comes to life and rises up, challenging you with an eerie, hissing growl.

Bearskin Rug: *Fighting Prowess*: 5; *Constitution*: 7; No armour.

If you defeat it, turn to **56**.

77: You attack the ice with your knifeblade, but it is refreezing as fast as you can chip it away. If you are determined to reach the mask you will have to think of something else to try – turn to **8**. If you are ready to give up and go through the archway, turn to **18**.

78: Slank can scent your fear and almost hear your racing heartbeat – although blind, he is yet dangerous. He lunges at you with the long, sparkling talons of his right hand, using them as a fencer uses a sword.

Slank: *Fighting Prowess*: 7; *Constitution*: 23; 3-pt armour.

If you defeat him, turn to **20**.

79: If you have them, you can use: the four leaf clover (turn to **81**); the daughter's teardrop (turn to **57**); a newt's eye (turn to **14**).

If you do not have any of these, or do not wish to use them, you now leave the room (turn to **18**).

80: Your ring emits a blinding pulse of light, but this has no effect whatsoever on the creature. It strikes you with a watery fist as you fumble for your weapon – roll one die to determine the damage from this blow, then turn to **50**.

81: You leave the clover in the mouth of the demon mask. That should prevent Slank from touching it. You trudge acros the icy floor to the archway and step through. Turn to **18**.

82: He comes over and lays his hands on your shoulders – apparently in a gesture of friendship, but you feel as if you are bound in shackles of cold iron. He fixes you with his one good eye and says, 'I have a riddle for you. My first is equality, my last is inferiority, and my whole is superiority – what am I?' Decide on your answer (think carefully!) and then turn to **52**.

83: You notice a bottle of grey-green stone at the bottom of the pool. Before you decide whether to reach in and take it or not, the surface of the pool starts rippling and heaving like a lake in a storm. Suddenly a watery being rises up out of the turbulent pool. Will you draw your weapon (turn to **50**), or find some other way to fight it (turn to **45**)?

84: Hushed, whispering voices seem to call from outside the tower – *'Awake, master. Death cannot hold you.'* You go to the window and look out, but there is nothing but the night and the howling wind.

Something stirs behind you. You freeze at the sound, then slowly turn... Slank has risen again, but altered now to his true form – he is much smaller than before, stooped, almost frail. His face is grey and lined, twisted and misshapen such that the hollow sockets of his eyes are not level. The effect is even more horrible than his previous appearance.

'I still have one life left,' he snarls. The voice is a strangled, halting croak. His power is greatly diminished, but you will have to fight hard to prevail against him.

Slank: *Fighting Prowess*: 7; *Constitution*: 18; 2-pt armour.

If you beat him, turn to **40**.

85: You get a whiff of the stuff in the cauldron when you are only halfway across the room, and it almost puts you off taking a look. When you do look, you wish you hadn't – it is a green, slimy broth full of unmentionable ingredients. If by any chance you want to drink this foul brew, turn to **39**. Otherwise you could continue on into the next room (turn to **58**) or investigate the larder (turn to **22**).

86: Roll one die. If you score 4 or less, turn to **54**. If you score 5 or 6, turn to **10**.

87: The little girl's teardrop is like an acid to Slank. He screams in rage and pain and clutches at his eye. Did Vimbol Greengosh explain to you the purpose of the armour fragment and the nun's hair? If so, turn to **31**. If not, turn to **78**.

88: You pass along a winding tunnel and enter a vaulted room lit with a sombre green radiance. A dark silhouette takes form in front of you. A tall, majestic woman. She is – magnificent. You stand in awe. A watery green hue dissolves from the room as she lifts the veil covering her face and you stare into the unfiltered light of her eyes. They shine like polished jade. You try to turn away, but, try as you might, you cannot break her mesmerizing gaze.

Mournful voices seem to echo in your head, greeting you – the voices of a hundred stony victims entrapped by the gorgon to become her companions and lovers. They stand in shadowed alcoves all about. Your world is with theirs now.

Share silence...

89: From an upper window you watch the exodus of the thousands of souls Slank had kept imprisoned here, some of them for aeons. They file from the castle and out across the swamps, where they fade from your mortal sight as they pass into the afterlife. You scan the milling throng for Vimbol Greengosh, and finally catch sight of him – capering merrily, he dances away from the castle towards whatever fate the afterlife reserves for merchants...

At last you are alone in the castle. You descend through the empty halls and stride away across the marshes. You do not look back until you reach the Mungo Hills, and by then there is no sign of the castle.

As you make your way back towards the town, you find that seers and wizards have already learned of your success. Balladeers roam the villages singing epic songs which tell of the archfiend's destruction and which refer to you as Demonslayer, or Knight of Souls, or several other rather flattering titles.

Hogron and his brothers have invited the whole town to an alfresco party in your honour. You are carried shoulder-high through the streets to the main square, where Hogron delivers a long-winded speech and then presents you with a chest containing 700 gold pieces and a suit of enchanted chainmail!

Your quest is ended. But keep your Adventure Record somewhere safe, for who knows what great deeds yet await you?□

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THE AUTHORS
To regular readers of White Dwarf, the author/illustrator team of Joe Dever and Gary Chalk needs little introduction. Both are contributing editors to the magazine with their popular 'Tabletop Heroes' miniatures review feature. In 1982, Joe Dever won the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons ® Championships in Baltimore, USA, and he has appeared on TV, radio and in the national press in connection with fantasy role-playing games. Gary Chalk is the inventor of the acclaimed wargame, 'Cry Havoc', and illustrator of the current bestselling fantasy game, 'Talisman'.

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SPARROW BOOKS AN IMPRINT OF ARROW PUBLICATIONS

Dear *WD*,

I've not GM'ed *RuneQuest*, though I have played in several campaigns for some years; and like many others I've met, the major fault I find with the system is that magic is too common. When every random monster and peasant you meet has several thousand Lunars worth of spells ready for use, magic is no longer the rare and wonderful thing of fantasy; and even in an ancient rather than a medieval setting, that should be the case. Further, cults are selling their major assets – the spells – rather than trying to keep them secret.

I suggest the following two modifications to avoid this; first, cults should not teach battle magic spells to laymen, but only to characters of at least Initiate rank in their own or allied cults. Second, to become an Initiate, in addition to all other requirements, a character should have INT, POW and CHA each of 12 or more. It is better to use the alternate character generation methods of Appendix A, so that PCs who want to, have a reasonable chance of meeting this requirement.

Magic will then, as in most fantasy and mythological literature, be available to the heroes and villains – but not to the beggars, peasants and minions surrounding them. The cults also retain slightly more power, mystery and awe.

I congratulate Robert Dale on producing one of the few items in *RuneRites* that have interested me, and also Mark Harrison for capturing so well the flavour of *Traveller* adventuring in his cartoon. I'm sure most *Traveller* GMs have read it and said to themselves, 'Yes – that's so-and-so's character exactly.'

Yours,
Andy Slack, Hampshire.

Dear *WD*,

I am disturbed about the reduction in the number of articles on *Traveller*, and the corresponding increase in the number of *RQ* articles. In issues 45-52, *RQ* articles outnumbered *Traveller* ones by 3 to 2 and, as a *Traveller* referee, I must protest. Surely *RQ* is not that much more popular than *Traveller*?

Yours gamefully,
Paul Cray, Preston.

Dear *WD*,

Snap out of it you Dwarfsters! Issue 53 puts your magazine well into middle age, and already it seems to show signs of failing health. Firstly, it is looking somewhat overweight, with articles such as the brilliantly repetitive *Fiend Factory* and the first resort of the unimaginative DM, a scene from *Lord of the Rings*. The sense of humour seems to be wearing thin as well, *Thrud* and *Gobbledigook* fell almost as flat as the imfamous *Travellers* this month, and only *Critical Mass* managed to maintain its acidic reputation. In the words of your reviewer, the *Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks* on which the *Castle of Lost Souls* is based, are aimed at 'nine to twelve year olds'. Why on earth do you waste paper on things like this when your own survey showed the average readers' age to be fifteen?

Only *Tabletop Heroes* proved useful; it was instrumental in soaking up most of the coffee I spilt while still in shock after reading the rest of issue 53.

I urge you to reconsider both the format and content of the next issues, or I and several other people will have to give up on what certainly used to be the best RPG magazine around, and turn to something else – Imagine™ that!

Yours hopefully,
Robert Waite, Leicester.

Dear *WD*,

I would just like to congratulate you on your highly entertaining, and most useful, series of articles on that most deadly of assassins the ninja (*WD56-59*). Messrs Elliot and Edwards did a superb job of a rather difficult subject and I am looking forward to many more fine articles from this entertaining pair.

Yours,
Claire Voyant, Cambridge.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! –Ed.

Dear *WD*,

Having bought *WD* since issue 9, I welcome any innovations. It has certainly improved in content, but I feel I must put pen to paper over the latest *RQ* additions.

Recently, many additions have seen the light of day in your *RuneRites* column, such as the *RQ* character classes (*WD49*), *Runeblades* (*WD39*) and now *Rings* (*WD52*). It is not that I am complaining about the quality of these articles, they are a colourful and welcome addition, but their relevant position in any *RQ* campaign is questionable.

RQ character classes may well be justified by helping younger players adjust to the game, but to me they seem like an attempt to bridge the gap between *RQ* and *D&D*, producing a system hybrid. *Surely* the point of the *RQ* system was that it prevented putting characters into classes which created restrictive stereotypes?

The argument against the rings is one of proliferation; the artifacts are extremely powerful, some of the rings having Rune spell qualities, and they would not be found in the backpack of any beginning adventurer. These items could easily overbalance the game if they are ten-a-penny.

Yours,
Richard Ashdown, Stroud.

Dear *WD*,

When I open my copy of *White Dwarf*, the first thing I turn to is the letters page. To my mind, this is the best part of the magazine as it offers arguments, helpful comments and optional rules. To this I am sure many agree. I don't see letters as bitchy, but a valuable addition to the quality of role-playing aid that you produce.

I think that a certain Mr Pulsipher gets enough space in the letters page as it is, without you meriting him with his own column, which, to my mind, leaves the unfortunate beginner with more unanswered questions after having read *Lew's Views* than he/she had before! To put a pessimistic tone over things, I have to say that *WD* will start to begin a downhill slide if it continues to print such dirge as *The Travellers*. Not only is it extremely unfunny, but three cartoons in one publication is a bit much to expect. Please, please, please scrap either *Lew's Views* or *The Travellers*, or even both and add another page of letters.

Yours,
B P Stevens, Writtle, Essex.

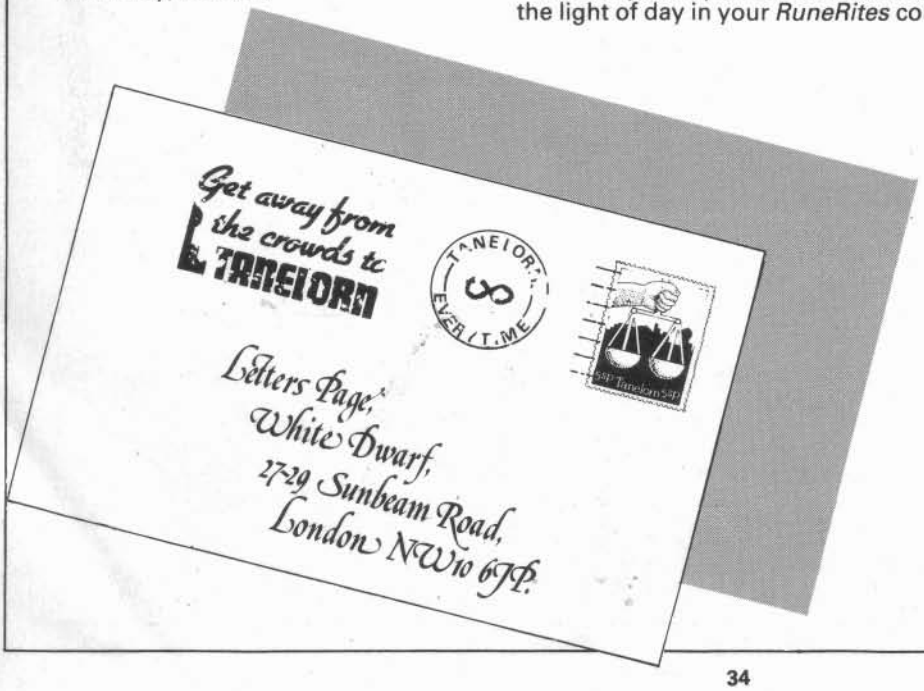
To be fair, The Travellers *appeals to many of our 'elder' readers, who seem to appreciate its more subtle humour –Ed.*

Dear *WD*,

After reading a preview about *RQ3* recently, it appears as if the rule changes will be so great, that it will be a totally new FRP system. Do I understand that all the previous *RQ* supplements will not be compatible with the new system, and more importantly, that the new supplements to be released by *Avalon Hill* will be incompatible with the old? It seems to me that *Avalon Hill* is abandoning present *RQ*ers in favour of its new system. Also could you please enlighten *RQ*ers about the future of the game in the UK.

Yours,
David Robb, Edinburgh.

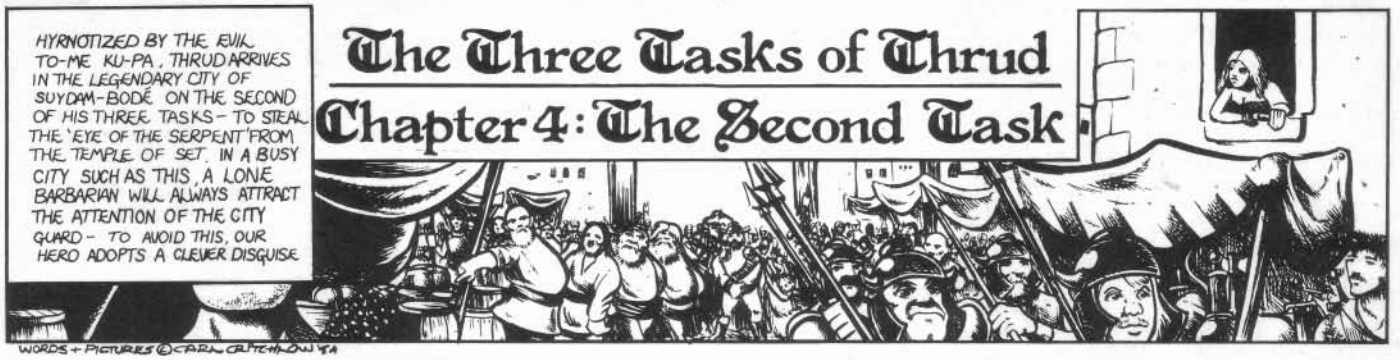
RQ3 *is still a mystery as far as the UK market is concerned! However, it does look like the game has essentially the same framework, with many new ideas and improvements –Ed.*



THRUD THE BARBARIAN

The Three Tasks of Thrud

Chapter 4: The Second Task



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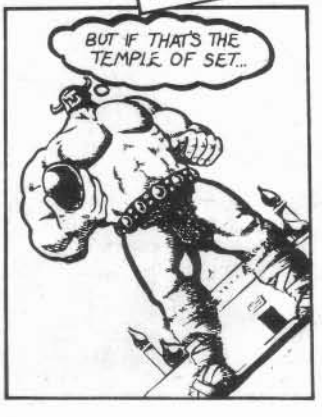


Tabletop Heroes *is a regular figure review and general fantasy modelling feature, by Joe Dever and Gary Chalk. This issue, new standards for the industry in...*

Flying the Flag

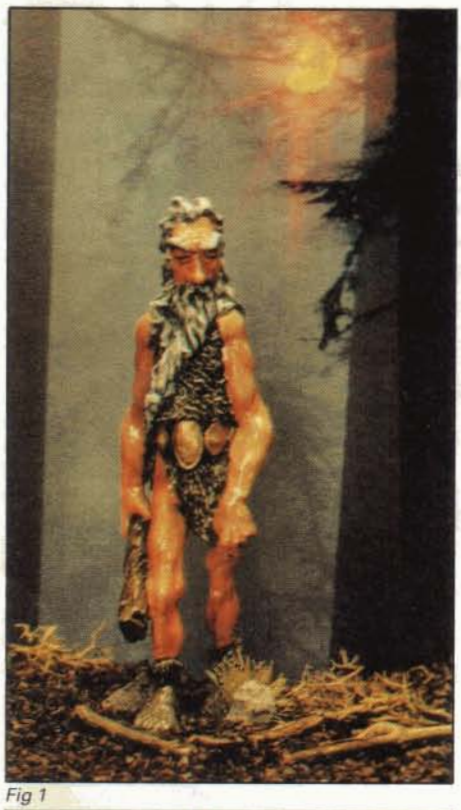


Fig 1

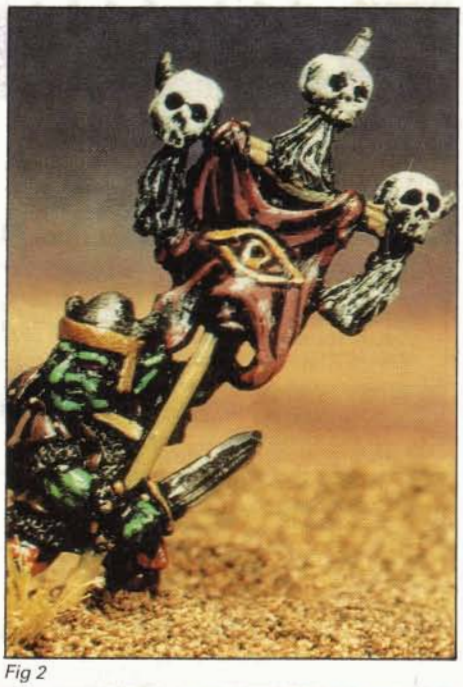


Fig 2

Fig 3

Fig 4

Fig 5

Fig 6

Photographs by Gary Chalk and Joe Dever

This month we've included a brief section on how to make model flags. We hope to include more practical modelling hints in future articles. If you have any useful or unusual tips for painting or modelling, do drop us a line. We'd like to start a *Fantasy Figure Forum* where readers, whether beginners or seasoned veterans, can share their ideas and techniques. Send your ideas to *FFF*, c/o *White Dwarf*, 27/29 Sunbeam Road, London, NW10 6JP, and we will publish the name of any reader whose hints we feature.

Fig 1 shows the beautifully detailed *Ral Partha* 'Frost Giant' (P13/1d) on his holidays (...a walk in the Black Forest?). This specimen has been painted to depict a native of a more temperate clime, but it is particularly stunning when painted in shades of blue and highlighted in white. This 'noble' giant would make an interesting and perhaps teetotal adversary to some of *Citadel's* latest Giants range (C28). If the '*Warhammer* view' of alcoholic giants [see *WD48*] holds true, then this character should have no difficulty in beating his more inebriate kinfolk.

Fig 2: This *Citadel* Night Goblin Standard Bearer (C13/1f) comes with the standard moulded onto the figure, and bears the 'lidless eye' emblem that has become a widely used 'evil' symbol amongst fantasy gamers. It is part of *Citadel's* large *Night Goblin* range; a tribe of lesser nasties that are equally suited to the dungeon as to the fantasy battlefield.

Fig 3: Sir Cedric Heartthrobb in the company of Corbitt Shortstuff, famous dwarf jester of the *Citadel* Dwarf Kings Court set. The mounted knight is from the *Essex* range of Feudal Knights, which also features dismounted versions of their 'horsed' figures. The setting of a tournament provides an excellent 'raison d'etre' for many fantasy scenarios; the training ground of the great warrior, an opportunity for the unknown and fortuneless, the career of the NPC and the favourite spectacle of any fantasy populace.

In *Fig 4* we happen to chance upon the beginning of a bar-room brawl, started no doubt by an argument over the division of the pile of gold on the tavern table. The scene features most of *Citadel's* Diorama Set Two (C34/2a) and Townsfolk (C32/2), who provide the non-player character background to the four polemical adventurers. The bar-room brawl is an ideal scenario for a large group of players, especially where the Dungeon Master has limited preparation time. The basic idea is to bring together player characters with opposing or inflicting roles, within the confines of a fantasy tavern. As each player attempts to fulfil their 'objective', usually at the expense of another player, so chaos ensues and the fun begins. *Best of White Dwarf Scenarios 1* has an excellent bar-room brawl scenario that comes complete with floorplans and character details.

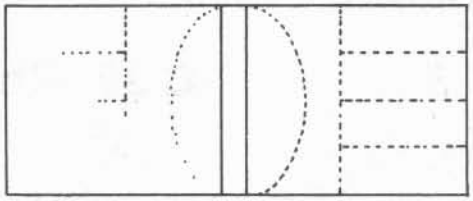
The decrepid wizard in *Fig 5* is an early *Citadel* casting from their old Fantasy Specials range, which has since been superceded by a new seated occupant who is younger and less sinister. He is reading a book on an accompanying lecturn and is now part of *Citadel's* Diorama set C34/2e, the rest of which features a necromancer with altar and victim; all very useful accessories for an evil temple or lich chamber. Talking of useful accessories, many readers have expressed their irritation at the lack of 'smaller' accessories that are currently available. Items like candlesticks, plates of food, stacks of books, wine goblets etc can really enhance a dungeon setting, and often inspire scenarios in their own right, but just do not appear in manufacturers' lists. Well, good news for all you sticklers for detail, for Rick Priestly of *Citadel Miniatures* informs us that they can supply small accessories to individual customer's requirements. Send a SAE to Rick at *Citadel*, and he'll be pleased to assist your quest for dungeon perfection. The warrior escort depicted around the seated wizard are Great Goblins from the *Citadel* C12 range (C12/1d).

Fig 6 shows two new *Ral Partha* figures, both elves, from their PO1 range. The elf shown holding a two-handed axe is their Elf Hero, whilst the standard bearer is in fact a converted High Elf; the flag staff and the shield having been added to the original figure. The elven flag is made of paper and was constructed as shown below in the *Flags and Banners* feature. The device of ship and stars has been painted in white but shaded with pale blue as opposed to grey. This helps to enhance the ultra-clean look, and it is a useful tip to use when painting paladin's cloaks or cleric's surcoats. Conversely, when you wish to use white on an 'evil' figure, a touch of green can bring out a very 'unnatural' look.

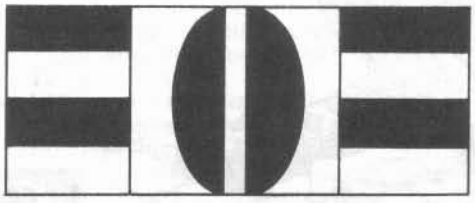
Next month, we hope to be featuring sci-fi figures, both in 15mm and 25mm scales, and we'll be setting our phasers to stun!

Flags and Banners

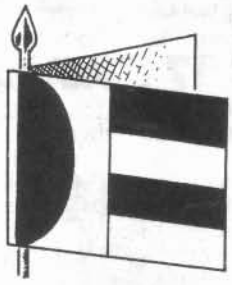
The method detailed below is one that we usually use to construct banners, pennons or any other type of miniature flags. Painting both sides of the flag while it is flat and opened out, is strongly recommended, rather than attempting to paint the banner once it has been stuck in place. Note that the following method is identical for all flags, regardless of their shape.



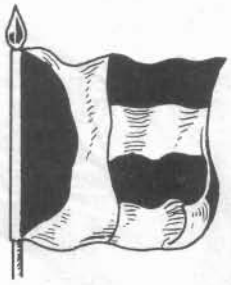
1: Use a piece of thin paper (no greater than 70g/m^2 substance). Using a ruler and set square, draw the basic shape of your flag, taking care to leave sufficient 'sleeve' where the flag will wrap around the flagpole. Now draw your motif on each side of the flag with a sharp pencil.



2: Paint your design with enamel, acrylic or poster paint. Do not forget to include the 'sleeve', which is often best painted in the same colour as the flagpole. Small details, lettering and outlining can be added once the paint has dried. A rapidograph pen is ideal for this sort of embellishment, but excellent results can be obtained from a much cheaper 'dipping pen' and indian ink.



3: Fold the flag in the middle and wrap it around the flagpole so that the 'sleeve' becomes moulded to the shape of the staff. Now carefully spread a contact adhesive (Uhu, Bostik, Evo-stick etc) to one side of the inner surface of the flag, and press the two sides together around the flagpole. It is essential to use as little glue as possible when sticking the two halves together.



4: Shape the paper so that it appears to be blowing in the wind. Flat flags are most unconvincing. All that remains to do now is to paint along the edge where the two flags meet (this will help to hide any seepage of glue), and varnish the entire flag and staff once the paint has thoroughly dried.□

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CITADEL MINIATURES

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RuneRites *is a regular* RuneQuest *column, edited by Dave Morris.*

Mystic Triptych

This issue we have a trio of ideas for enlivening your campaign – a new Rune spell, a weird new monster and a new magic item. I particularly like the Ring of Holding, *as it should provide an entertaining rôle-play exchange between Referee and player when the ringwearer bargains with his captive.*

NIGHT SHRIEKERS
by Oliver Johnson

These monsters are bizarre, bipedal predators which have evolved from large bats. The legs have developed from the bat's wings while the grasping hind limbs grow forward along the creature's body to hang below its fanged jaws. Night shriekers have retained the sonic 'sight' of their bat ancestors, and their eerie screeching can be heard by night as packs of them run through the forest in search of prey.

STR:	2d6+2	Right leg	(01-04)	0/4
CON:	3d6	Left leg	(05-08)	0/4
SIZ:	1d6+4	Body	(09-11)	0/6
POW:	2d6+5	Right 'arm'	(12-14)	0/3
DEX:	2d6+14	Left 'arm'	(15-17)	0/3
Move:	10	Head	(18-20)	0/3

Hit Points: 9-10 average
Defence: 15% average
Armour: none
Bite: (1d6+1), SR6, 50%.
Claws: (1d4 each), SR6, 60%.
Skills: Listen/Spot Hidden 100%.

(*This nocturnal horror has been taken from Dougal Dixon's excellent book* After Man, *where it is one of many creatures that inhabit a chain of subtropical islands where bats or their descendants*

dominate most ecological niches. The discovery of such islands on Glorantha, Questworld, or wherever could provide a few Darkness cults with an intriguing array of familiars. But remember that the theory of evolution would be unknown in these worlds, and the night shriekers' resemblance to bats would remain but a curious mystery. –DM)

THE RED DEATH
by Steve Foster

Cost: 3 POW
Range: 160km
Duration: 1 lunar month

This non-Stackable, non-Reusable spell requires about half a wineglass of the intended victim's blood. This is prepared by casting *matrix creation* on it. Then, on the night of the full moon, the *red death* spell itself is cast on the blood. The caster makes an immediate attempt to overcome his victim's POW – and, because of the spell's virulent intensity, his chance is increased by 10%. If he fails, the victim is not affected and will be unaware that any attack has been made on him.

If the caster's attack is successful, the victim is afflicted with the *red death* and can only be saved by the death of the caster before the night of the next full moon. The symptoms of the *death* are:

1st week – painless red blotches appear on the victim's face.

2nd week – the blotches spread; the victim temporarily loses 1 point of CON owing to illness.

3rd week – the blotches cover the whole body; they become slightly painful, reducing the victim by 5% in all skills except languages, owing to loss of concentration.

4th week – the blotches become leprous red sores oozing a red ichor; another point of CON is lost.

The Final Night – eight hours before he is to die, the victim experiences hallucinations which (if he can decipher them) provide clues to the identity and current location of the spell's caster; this gives him a last chance to save himself, since the coming of dawn will see him reduced to a purulent slime...

With the demise of the caster, all symptoms of the *death* will reverse within a few melee rounds. No other healing spells will be effective, though *divination* and the like can be used to give information about the caster, of course.

(*Although this spell sounds just right for Red Goddess worshippers, Steve designed it for a non-Gloranthan setting. Note, therefore, that '1 lunar month' means 28 days, not the 7-day cycle of the Red Moon. Steve adds that the spell is available only to High Priests of certain Death cults – Mallia and Thanatar, I suspect. The Black Fang Brotherhood should* not *have it. Their cult is not really that tough, and with their special power to block* divinations *it would make them unbeatable! –DM*)

THE RING OF HOLDING
by Yvonne Newnham

This is a pale yellow stone in a setting of red gold. If looked into, the character must roll POWx5 or less on d100 or be drawn within the stone. He then vanishes from the physical world and can be seen as a tiny wraith-like figure within the ring by whoever wears it. The ringwearer can converse with the trapped character and can free him if the character agrees to perform some service on his release – the character will be magically bound to perform this service as soon as he can. For example, the wearer might require a trapped character to go on a quest to obtain a legendary item for him; if the character agreed, he would be freed from the *Ring* and would be constrained to set out on the quest immediately. For every month spent in the *Ring*, there is a cumulative 1% chance that a character will go mad. If

this happens, he may insanely refuse to agree to perform any service at all, making it impossible for the wearer to get him out of the ring. Since the ring can hold only one person at a time, a recalcitrant victim can make it unusable, so the wearer must attempt to come to some agreement with his captive before the latter goes mad from his confinement.□

The Gods of the Shapelings

by Fred Lee Cain

The invisible people covered in last issue's *Fiend Factory* worship a vast pantheon of Neutral (or at times, Good-inclined) deities who are known as The Procreators of Eternity! Only a few have the vaguest personification – presented below are some of them.

THE PRIME TECHNICIAN
– Greater god (god of knowledge, science and craftwork)
Armour Class: -2
Move: 14"/24"
Hit Points: 340
No of Attacks: 1
Special Attacks: Can bring forces of nature to bear (lightning, tornado etc). Also can raise wisdom and intelligence of a character temporarily.
Special Defences: See above. Can *teleport* from danger.
Magic Resistance: 80%
Size: M (6')
Alignment: Neutral
Worshipper's Align: All alignments
Symbol: The balance and chemical retort.
Plane: Limbo
Cleric/Druid: 20th level cleric/ 14th level druid.
Fighter: 5th level fighter.
Magic-User/Illusionist: 30th level each.
Thief/Assassin: Nil
Monk/Bard: Nil
Psionic Ability: II
S: 20 (+3, +8); I: 24; W: 24; D: 21; C: 21; CH: 20.

The Prime Technician is a robed and cowled figure clad in light-grey; embodiment of the blind and dedicated, dispassionate and amoral search for knowledge. A true Neutral.

The Technician is second in command of their conclave. Like his fellows in 'appearance'; he is depicted as a humanoid figure dressed in robes, gloves and vacant cowl, of dark blue, with a long staff of dark wood entwined with a brazen serpent clutched in one hand. (Treat as a *Staff of Magi/Power*).

Fiend Factory is a regular department for readers' monsters in Dungeons & Dragons, *edited by Albie Fiore. This issue, the gods of last issue's creatures.*

THE CHAMPION
– Greater god (god of courage, battle, and martial skill)
Armour Class: -5 (plus +4 plate armour)
Move: 20"/30"/20"/18"
Hit Points: 380
No of Attacks: 2-3
Damage/Attack: By weapon type and 5-50 (+12)
Special Attacks: Gaze will act as a *fear, death, spiritwrack, dispel evil, flame strike* or *disintegrate* spell (eyes appear and glow red when gaze is used as a weapon). Touch of hand can act as a *lightning bolt* and if The Champion strikes with his fists, there is no Save against this (a Save may be possible if the blow is a kick).
Special Defences: Can *teleport*, regeneration in 3 rounds of any damage. Also, gaze has powers of *know alignment, dispel evil*; and *confusion* (no Save on any of these).
Magic Resistance: 80%
Size: M (7' tall)
Alignment: Lawful neutral
Worshipper's Align: Lawful neutral (can be inclined toward Good or Evil; but must be dedicated to 'martial virtues' of 'order' and 'honour').
Symbol: An empty, crested, blue-black helmet with raised visor.
Plane: Limbo (The Halls of Eternity)
Cleric/Druid: 20th level cleric/ 13th level druid.
Fighter: 20th level
Magic-User/Illusionist: 28th level magic-user/25th illusionist
Thief/Assassin: Nil
Monk/Bard: 17th level monk/ 12th level bard.
Psionic Ability: II
S: 23 (+5, +11); I: 24; W: 24; D: 21; C: 23; CH: 22.

The Champion, Marshall of all the armed hosts of the Procreators, is an armour-clad figure armed with a +3 *Vorpal Sword; Wand of Fear/Fire* and *Illumination; Spell Projector* (pistol; multiple options of spells of: *hold person, flame strike, explosive runes, lightning bolt* and *cone of cold*). Clad in blue-black +4 plate armour with a silver *Belt of Levitation*, he is the ultimate, personification incarnate of the blindly obedient professional soldier. His battles against such foes as Orcus, Tiamat, Belial and Nyarlathotep have been epic encounters, from which the Procreator and his numberless legions have always emerged unvanquished.

THE HIGH OVERLORD
– Greater God (arbitrator of Destiny, First among the Procreators)
Armour Class: -1
Move: 20"/36"
Hit Points: 400
No of Attacks: 2 (+ spells)
Damage/Attack: 10-100 (+16)
Special Attacks: Gaze of eyes can project a *temporal stasis* spell or (against any devils, demons etc of the nether planes) *spiritwrack* (no save). A touch from either hand will act as a *lightning bolt, cone of cold*, or *disintegrate* spell.

Special Defences: *Teleport*, regeneration in 3 rounds of any damage. Immune to any weapons less than +4.
Magic Resistance: 95%
Size: M (6')
Alignment: Lawful neutral
Worshipper's Align: Any alignment (though evil worshipper's are usually only Neutral evil).
Symbol: A circle divided vertically into two halves; half black, half white.
Plane: Limbo
Cleric/Druid: 29th level cleric/14th level druid.
Fighter: 11th level fighter
Magic-User/Illusionist: 29th level MU/26th level illusionist.
Thief/Assassin: Nil
Monk/Bard: Nil
Psionic Ability: II
S: 23 (+5, +11); I: 24; W: 25; D: 22; C: 23; CH: 23.

The High Overlord is an unseen figure, apparently clad in armour beneath a cowled and belted jumpsuit, with a circlet-band of small, linked, square plates of gold encircling the brow of his hood (like an Arab burnoose). His garb is a neutral shade of russet-brown, worn over banded gauntlets and armour of silvered steel. The High Overlord is recognised as chief administrator over the Procreators and is a figure of impartial authority, who makes decisions based on pure necessity, unbiased by emotion, hardship or gain.

It is rumoured that on rare occasions, the High Overlord will manifest himself (secretly), in the guise of a tall smiling handsome man of middle years, with slender youthful frame and features, silvery-grey hair; charming gracious and educated speech. He is always clad in white apparel appropriate to the culture and setting to intervene when Fate requires it – always to restore the balance of order.

THE ALL-LOVING
– Greater goddess
(goddess of benevolence)
Armour Class: -2
Move: 20"/25"/18"/15"
Hit Points: 360
No of Attacks: 2
Damage/Attack: 20-50
Special Attacks: See text
Special Defences: See text
Magic Resistance: 76%
Size: M (5½')
Alignment: Neutral good
Worshipper's Align: All alignments
Symbol: Silver halo and wand
Plane: Limbo/Elysium
Cleric/Druid: 20th level cleric/16th level druid.
Fighter: 15th level fighter
Magic-User/Illusionist: 23rd level magic-user/illusionist.
Thief/Assassin: Nil
Monk/Bard: Nil
Psionic Ability: II
S: 19 (+3, +7); I: 21; W: 23; D: 23; CH: 24.

The All-Loving is a youthful (and shapely) feminine figure seen only in a close-fitting, yellow-and-dun-hued jumpsuit; with golden belt; fur-trimmed boots and gauntlets; and a shadowy, fur-lined cowl; with a silver, circlet-band hovering motionless over her head as a halo and sometimes, a brown cape that functions as a *Robe of Blending*. An apotheosis of all that is loving and protective, she is one of the more actively benevolent figures among the Procreators of Eternity; bestowing a particular watchfulness over those in love or those especially dedicated to an ideal; or to those who are lost, lonely, or bereaved. Though preferring to act unseen, she will, if taking an active role (in particular, in defence of the young and/or innocent), be able to provide one or more of the following spells: *bless* at +3; *protection from evil; create food* and *water; find the path* or to answer 1-3 questions or grant 1-3 *wishes*. If involved in battle, she will strike with a silver wand that can inflict 20-50 points damage on a hit, or serve as a *Rod of Thunderbolts*.

General Notes
The realm of the Procreators is a shadowy nether-domain, forming a labyrinthine complex of palaces and laboratories, located between Limbo and the Plane of Concordant Opposition; ..neither overly cheerful nor unpleasant. A place of mystery and lore; waiting and making; seeking and finding. For any beings of Good and Neutral alignment, it is quiet and shadowy – a peaceful and pleasant place of wonders unveiled; where dream-like waking merges with happy but lifelike dreams. For beings of Evil alignment, unbeing alternates with a shadowy dream-life, where nightmares threaten to become reality.

Visitors to their realm – mortal or otherwise – are received with gracious indifference. Although not directly or openly allied with any pantheon of Good, the Procreators are no friends to Evil and have, on more than one occasion, launched highly feared and successful incursions into the realms of the Lords of Evil, for reasons known only to themselves.

Although they cannot be invoked, sometimes – during threats of great Evil – they will respond to a plea for aid (3%), appearing in great, armed hosts – often in eagle or swallow-shaped, flying birds-ships, or (if at sea) in huge fleets of shark or crocodile-shaped war-vessels; to a great, majestic fanfare of trumpets and drums (the Procreators herald only their arrival; never their victory). On such occasions, if battle is the order of the day, they will fight relentlessly and without yielding or regard for odds; but sometimes, some of their 'help' may be of 'questionable' value, as they will (10% of the time) not hesitate to employ weapons of highly destructive enchantment that would threaten Good as well as Evil. Such weapons usually result in a manifestation of power drawn from one of the Elemental Planes, creating some local form of natural upheaval or cataclysm (such as a tidal wave, hurricane; earthquake, meteor strike etc). Since such tactics may obliterate any and all combatants for an area covering anywhere from 50' square to 10 square miles, survival may depend on precautions and quick thinking. It's not certain whether the Procreators don't realise the magnitude of some of their attacks or in a true Neutral point of view, see life and death as only twin parts of nature.

There seems to be some evidence that, at least sometimes, this neglect is something of an oversight, as (45% of the time), if an individual can catch the attention (in time) of a specific Procreator (or group) and throw themselves on its/their mercy and beseech rescue, the Procreator(s) will provide some means of protection or escape.

Very rarely (1%) a specific Procreator will elect to answer a prayer of a Neutrally inclined character. The High Overlord is something of an oracular figure and may appear (usually enthroned) to bestow information or advice (50% chance the help of a Seer, Sage or Scribe is needed to fully translate or interpret the information so it can be helpful [the Procreators will never give false or deliberately harmful advice]. The Prime Technician may provide information, technical advice and inspiration for a specific problem. The All-Loving can provide a wide range of aid if her help is specifically requested. (The DM may wish to provide identities for other Procreators covering other fields, or clear suggestions for others suggested by Players).

Procreators will only respond personally to one plea from a character (if at all), and may demand a service in return; but they do not demand offerings or answer for sacrifices (or even insist that one requesting their aid be one of their worshippers)! They cannot be *summoned* or *gated*.

Their manner when perceived is lofty, dispassionate and detached; with more of a emotionless zeal of self-absorbtion for their own ends. Their eyes will sometimes be seen in the shadows of their helms or cowls; pale, glowing and (usually) blank, their voices are purported to sound rather calm, sepulchral and solemn, but not really unpleasant or frightening (or sad, angry, or hinting much of any emotion).

Final Note: Inspiration for Surrogate-Forms comes from art and stories of Steve Ditko, *The Iron Warrior*; Jack Kirby and from the Walt Disney movie *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*. The Procreators of Eternity were taken from a two-part story in the B&W comic-magazine *Weird Tales of the Macabre*.□

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For answer see page 53

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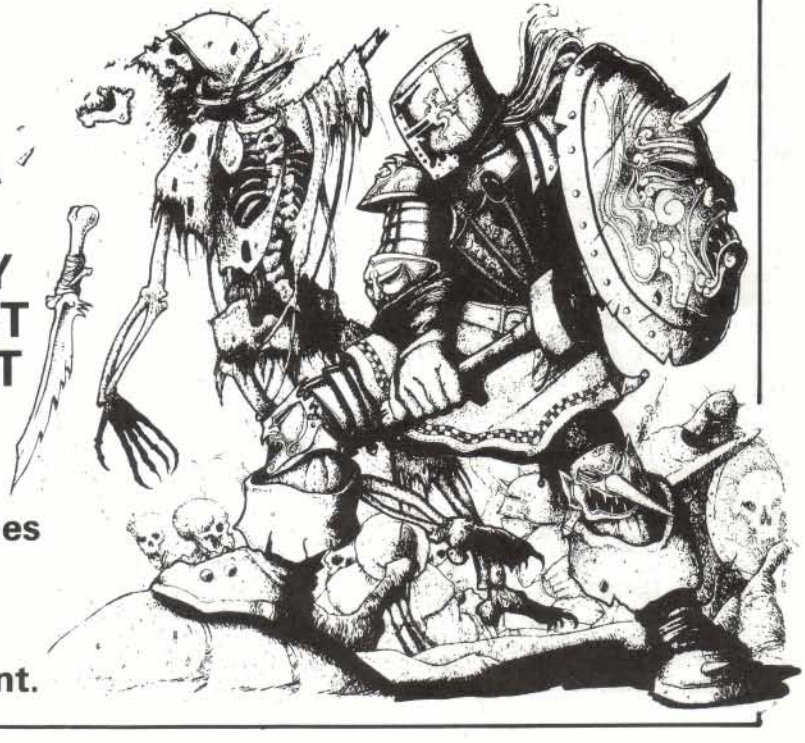

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Notes: Please vote for *propriety* games only, not classical games such as *Chess, Go,* etc.

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1:. . . . . .
2:. . . . . .
3:. . . . . .

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1:. . . . . .
2:. . . . . .
3:. . . . . .

C Best Solo Adventure
1:. . . . . .
2:. . . . . .
3:. . . . . .

D Best Fantasy Boardgame
1:. . . . . .
2:. . . . . .
3:. . . . . .

E Best Science Fiction Boardgame
1:. . . . . .
2:. . . . . .
3:. . . . . .

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1:. . . . . .
2:. . . . . .
3:. . . . . .

G Best General Boardgame
1:. . . . . .
2:. . . . . .
3:. . . . . .

H Best Abstract Game
1:. . . . . .
2:. . . . . .
3:. . . . . .

I Best Computer Game
1:. . . . . .
2:. . . . . .
3:. . . . . .

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2:. . . . . .
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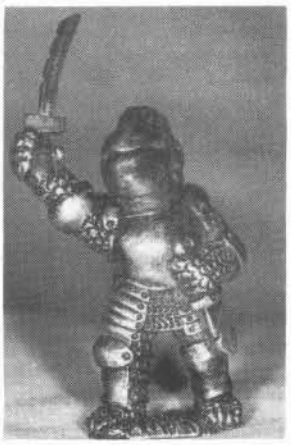

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Arch Enemies in FRP

by J H Dickson

'Oh no, not that filthy umber hulk *again*!' came the unanimous cry.

This umber hulk, which started as a wandering monster, had somehow turned into an arch enemy. It had outwitted, escaped from, robbed blind and even murdered members of the party, and now it was here again. It had stolen a folder – a very important folder, which it used as an inanimate hostage if things got rough.

'Kill me and you'll never get it,' was the umber hulk's standard reply to a threat.

The 'ransom' for this folder was gratefully received by the fiend many times, though each time he found some new way of getting out of delivering. He was the arch enemy.

But all good things must one day come to an end. When he assaulted Zimone, the high priestess, in front of the rest of the party, it was the final straw.

Battle took place and the umber hulk died; the folder was found on the hulk's person, and so came about the end of a fearful arch enemy. It was almost a shame to kill him.

Every party should have an arch enemy. People who spend the majority of their lives hacking and slashing and doing their best to slay and maim monsters can hardly help it. Those sort of people tend to be rather unpopular with monsters. They make enemies easily.

Survivors from a monster massacre are the obvious candidates. Their friends and possibly family have been slaughtered, they have been injured, their dwellings ransacked and possessions stolen. Revenge is strong in their hearts.

Only the most powerful or stupid monsters will run yelling after the party, sword flailing. If the characters have defeated them once, why shouldn't they again, now the monsters' numbers are fewer?

Put yourself in the place of the vengeful monster. It would not only plan the attack very carefully, but would usually rally support first, too. Other survivors and nearby bands of monsters might help, the other bands not necessarily of the same race; elves might help against dwarves, anyone might help if they might be next on the party's hit list. Mercenaries may be hired.

As characters become more powerful, so should their arch enemies. A magic-user with only *write, shield* and *magic missile* spells, and 5HP, may well have nothing more deadly than an orc for an arch enemy, but even a member of Urukhai is nothing to a mage flinging *lightning bolts* around, as he may well become. Eventually, nothing is left but to use demons and devils.

Don't go too far – Geryon can defeat any character – or should be able to if your campaign is well run. One of my players made exactly that mistake, and he is no more.

Also remember that on the *Prime Material* planes the greater devils and arch-devils can be killed and re-killed as many times as they have points of constitution, which makes them excellent arch enemies.

Arch enemies should appear reasonably regularly, if only to test their power against that of the character, which is ever increasing. Don't make the mistake of making them appear *too* often, however; it gets a little monotonous, and you know from real life that you get tired of even your favourite things if sampled continuously.

'You! I should have known, you swine.'

'Yes, it is I – do you think I'd let this opportunity to kill you slip out of my hands? Take that, you dog!'

NPC arch enemies can be the most fun to DM, and are the most long running. The reason for this is that they advance in levels like the characters they are the arch enemies of, and so, unlike the orc mentioned earlier, are always a match for the character, and hence a challenge. For this reason, an NPC arch enemy is also the easiest to DM, and the best choice for the beginner.

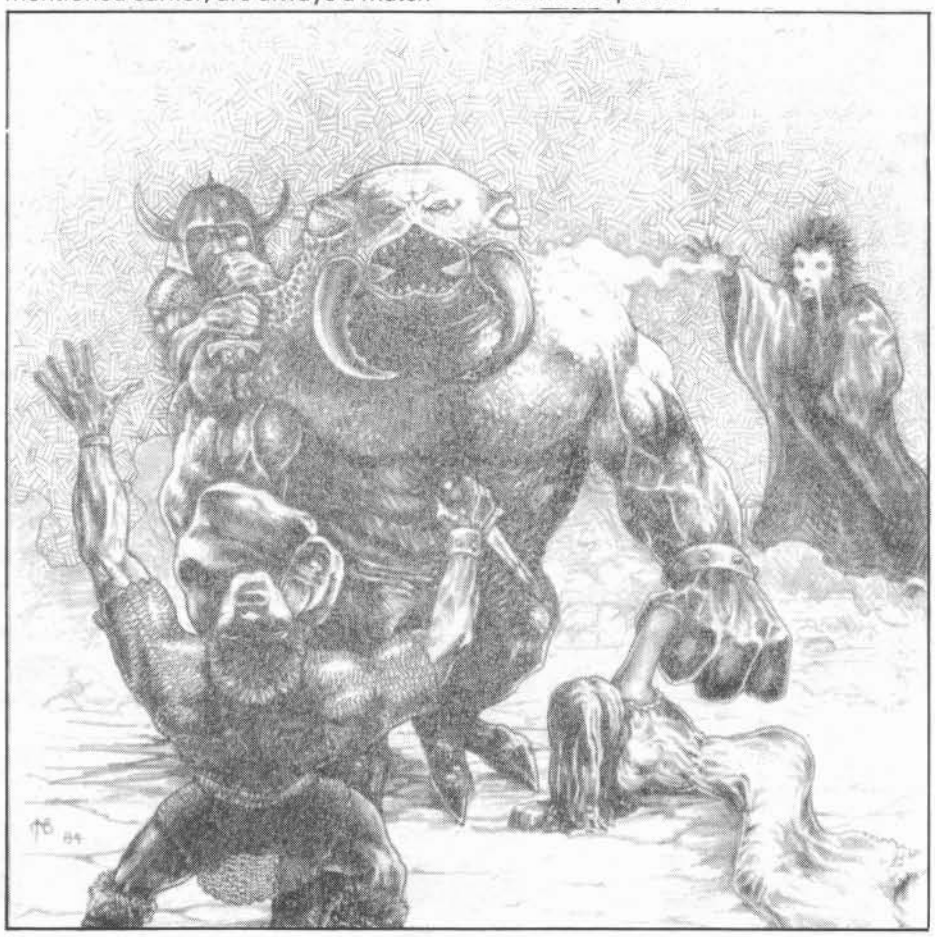
With the monsters that *don't* increase in ability, and therefore become less of a challenge, three options are open to you:

1. You can allow the failing arch enemy to retire gracefully, and introduce another.
2. You can have a momentous 'last stand' in which the arch enemy upholds his honour in a final fight, while he still poses a threat, almost always resulting in his death. This always goes down well.
3. The arch enemy neither retires nor admits his defeat, but simply becomes more devious. He uses all his abilities to the full. He relies more and more on his cunning to outwit his foe than on his sword arm.

Finally, the rival's dungeon; this can be a special dungeon hired out to wealthy characters, or their arch enemies, or both, or can be just a highly entertaining scenario – it amounts to the same thing.

The character and arch enemy enter the dungeon at opposite ends, and must search out and kill each other. Make a record at all times of where the arch enemy is, but don't tell the player unless they meet.

The two rivals use their ingenuity to lower their opponents HP as much as possible first by setting traps, while avoiding those set by the opponent. Monsters should be scarce in this dungeon; powerful monsters could kill one or the other of the rivals and that would defeat the object of the dungeon, but should be present in small numbers. Leave a few false trails too, just to add a little more spice.□



Hayes rolls for PATRON Trustworthiness.

* Die modification.

Starbase is an alternate-monthly column for readers' ideas for Traveller, *edited by Bob McWilliams. This issue, something on varying universal 'laws'.*

The Edge of Infinity

Variant Universes in Traveller

by Marcus L Rowland

Since *Traveller* is a game of science fiction rather than scientific fact referees should consider the possibility of designing a universe with an unusual structure.

Curved Space

The normal *Traveller* universe is apparently infinite, with each sector joining another in a flat plane spreading across the universe. An enterprising referee could consider 'folding' a single sector, by having the 'top' join the 'bottom' and the 'left' the 'right'. This is illustrated in *figure 1*, showing a normal sector surrounded by four others, and a 'folded' sector surrounded by itself. The boundaries between the 'top' and 'bottom', and between the 'sides', are of course undetectable – in fact non-existent – and are crossed by jump routes like the boundaries between normal sectors. Advantages for a referee are compactness, with a finite number of systems necessary to fill the universe, and the fact that short cuts are available which limit the longest possible journey to half a sector. This can have dramatic effects on the resolution of events. However, it does mean that large political organisations such as the Imperium are unlikely. Referees wishing to add more systems can add another 'folded' sector parallel to the first, linked by a few long jump routes (*Fig 2*). For more unusual effects it is possible to link the 'top' of a sector to one 'side' and the 'bottom' to the other, as in *figure 3*.

Space Warps, Wormholes, etc

These anomalies in the normal structure of the universe can be of any size, from a few centimetres in diameter to the width of a solar system. Objects entering them are instantaneously connected to another area of the universe. Small warps have value as transport and communications facilities, although they will rarely be in convenient locations, while a really large warp might surround a solar system, which would in effect be in two locations simultaneously. Ships jumping into the system in one location would have an exactly equal chance of jumping out into the area surrounding either of the locations. If there isn't a system in the corresponding destination hex it might be a little unfortunate, so a kind referee should have an identical pattern of systems within a four-parsec range of each location (*Fig 4*). The two linked locations could be a few parsecs apart, as illustrated, or at opposite sides of a sector. Another possibility is that a ship entering such a system would be duplicated in both surrounding areas when it jumped out. Players could be aware of the duplication, and of their 'dopplegangers' fate – they might be psionically linked so that if one died, the other would die – or could remain ignorant until the referee chooses to let the 'two' ships meet. Worlds in the middle of a space warp would probably have a lot of peculiar features – twice the normal number of stars in the sky, a sun abnormally rich in heavy elements (it absorbs twice the usual amount of interstellar dust), and very high gas and micrometeorite counts throughout the system and so on.

Wormholes are similar to space warps, but involve travel at the speed of light rather than an instantaneous passage between one location and another. However, it would be impossible to tell the difference unless players actually travelled through such a hole, for they would experience no passage of time while the universe aged by years or centuries. If referees use either warps or wormholes they should be extremely rare, with only one or two per campaign. They should not be combined with any form of closed universe.

Unnatural Laws

In this section are all the odder suggestions of science, science fiction and pseudo-science, from Velikovsky's unusual version of celestial mechanics (based on the 1920s idea of atomic physics) to the more outlandish ideas of speculative physics and mathematics.

Breakdown of Probability: an area of the universe experiences localised alterations of normal probability, with consequent chemical and physical instabilities, peculiar coincidences (everyone dials the same wrong number simultaneously), and a general breakdown of cause and effect. See *The Infinite Man* by Daniel F Galouye for one slightly extreme description of this process.

Dimensionless Number Anomalies: an effect which causes strange discrepancies between the normal results of measurement and calculation and the results of actual work. A typical effect might be that two metre long girders are welded together to produce one a hundred and sixty centimetres long. See *Getaway From Getahwei* by Colin Kapp.

Artificial Universes: some sort of artificial structure, as small as a single system or as large as the 'real' universe. It might even be a wholly imaginary creation, a figment of the 'mind' of a suitably powerful computer. This concept embraces a huge variety of possible structures, with many strange phenomena for players to encounter. For variations on this theme see *The Maker Of Universes* by Philip José Farmer, *Counterfeit World* by Daniel F Galouye, and *The Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy* by Douglas Adams.

Velikovsky Mechanics: in this peculiar system, planets can suddenly develop orbital instabilities and fall towards their sun, approaching other planets but being repelled by enormous electrostatic charges. Other effects of these close encounters are the formation of hydrocarbons in the atmosphere, with some being converted to edible carbohydrates (eg manna), odd orbital effects such as temporary halts in a planet's rotation, and the like. Interested referees should read *Worlds In Collision* by I Velikovsky, but turn off their critical faculties while doing so.

Referees must make every effort to be fair and consistent. Once a particular anomaly is realised the players should be given every possible opportunity to exploit it, if they can think of suitable methods. Above all, the referee should exercise as much restraint as possible – a universe in which every second system holds a black hole, a space warp, or some other peculiar manifestation will soon become boring for players and referee alike. Outside whatever variations are used, the referee should stick as closely as possible to orthodox play. When a suitable balance between conventional play and unusual physics is achieved, both the referee and players should find an added interest in the game.□

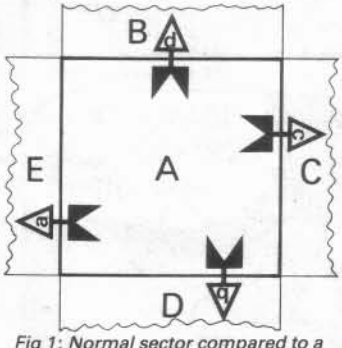


Fig 1: Normal sector compared to a closed folded universe. Sector A is surrounded by sectors B-E with the borders crossed by several jump routes a-d.

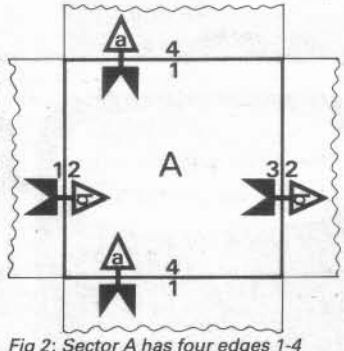


Fig 2: Sector A has four edges 1-4 linked as shown. Two jump routes are illustrated, one linking the 'Top' to the 'Bottom', a, and one linking 'sides', b. The jump routes follow directions of the arrows.

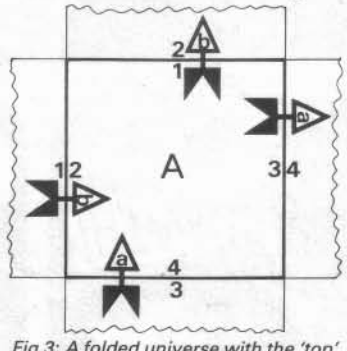


Fig 3: A folded universe with the 'top' linked to one 'side' and the 'bottom' linked to the other. Jump route 'a' links the 'bottom' to one 'side', and 'b' links the 'top' to the other 'side'.

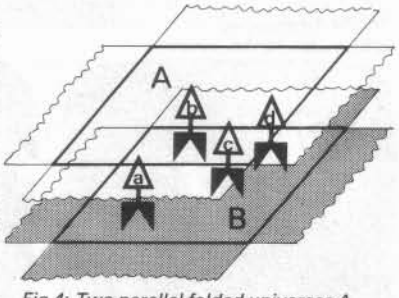


Fig 4: Two parallel folded universes A and B linked by a few jump routes (suggested length J3, or longer with 'stepping stone' systems.)

ONE LINERS! POSTCARD

One Liners is a new regular column for the Newsboard consisting of very brief reviews of the new products we've seen over the last month. Most of the games will be reviewed in more depth in Open Box later, but for the moment our one line reviews should give you some idea of what's inside that shrink-wrapped package.

Yours,

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AVALON HILL
Powers & Perils (£19.95): These rules although too long and complex for our tastes, might have some useful ideas for existing campaigns. *Lords of Creation* (£10.45): Opposite to the above; nice simple system, clearly written rules for any setting from fantasy to sci-fi. *Horn of Roland* (£7.95): The first official scenario for *Lords of Creation*, looks very good indeed. We'd like to give this game a try.

MAYFAIR
The Keep Boardgame (£16.95): Simple game for all the family, based on a fantasy film to be shown in the UK later in the year. *Hammers Slammers* (£16.95): Based on the novel by Dave Drake, tactical armoured combat in the far future (seems to be based on *Panzerleader*).

ROLEAIDS
The Keep, Deadly Powers, Swordthrust, Evil Ruins, Shipwrecker, Tower of Magicks, The Contract, Dragons of Wen T'seng, Question of Gravity (£4.95 each): Nine un-official AD&D scenarios every bit as good as TSR's official modules. *Dwarfs, Elves, Wizards, Dark Folk* (£7.95 each): Four new play-aids containing the history, social background, religions etc for various races in *AD&D*; *Dark Folk* looks especially good.

IRON CROWN ENTERPRISES
Middle Earth Role-Playing (£6.95): Complete role-playing game for use with *ICE*'s Middle Earth playaids; fairly complex but the system plays well once learnt and any of the *Rolemaster* modules can be plugged in to expand the system, a bargain at £6.95. *Arms/Claw Law* (10.95), *Spell Law* (£11.95), *Character Law* (£6.95): An advanced FRP system, excellent except for the poor quality of the rule writing, each module can be used on its own or combined to form a complete system. *Rolemaster* (£24.95): All the above (except *Campaign* and *Character Law*) in the one box! *Bree & The Barrow Downs* (£4.95): The first scenario for *MERP*, easily up to *ICE*'s usual high standards.

RUNEQUEST 3

Avalon Hill promise that the revised edition of *RuneQuest* will be available in the very near future.

RQ3 will be sold as a complete boxed set for $38, or the Player's Set and Referee's Set at $20 and $25 respectively. *Games Workshop* hope to be able to continue publishing the game, but if not and it has to be imported, the UK price is likely to quadruple(!) with a corresponding decrease in the popularity of the game. Hopefully this will not happen as it will be a sad day when *RQ* fades from the FRP scene.

JUDGE DREDD THE ROLE-PLAYING GAME

Working from a concept of Ian Livingstone's, Rick Priestly of *Citadel* has finished the 1st draft of the Judge Dredd RPG. The system being used is a (heavily) revised version of *Warhammer*, with lots of extra rules, a greatly extended character generation system, and much more emphasis on role-playing (rather than mass combat).

Games Workshop will be publishing the game and hope to have it ready in time for Christmas this year.

STAR TREK UK

Games Workshop have successfully negotiated with *FASA* and *Paramount* to print the *Star Trek* RPG in the UK. They hope to have the game out by September at a retail price of £9.95. At the same time *Games Workshop* will be importing all the supplements and scenarios that back the game up (some 18 different items).

In the pipeline from *FASA* is a ship-to-ship combat system for *Star Trek* and a series of games based upon *Battlestar Galactica*, all of which should be available by Xmas. More details when we've seen them.

BLACK SUN

Black Sun is a new fanzine that is to replace *Games Workshop*'s old *Mailing Club News*. It is to contain 12 pages of news, reviews, competitions, special offers, role-playing scenarios, and will be free (yes FREE!!) to all subscribers to *WD* and customers of *Games Workshop*'s Mail Order Department. Alternatively, just send an SAE to *Games Workshop* Mail Order, 27-29 Sunbeam Road, London NW10 6JP for a free copy.

MEMO

FROM: Beast Enterprises
TO: All AD&D players

Beast Enterprises, publishers of Tortured Souls magazine, will be running an AD&D prize competition at Dragonmeet. We need teams of four players, but time is limited so please send an SAE to the address below (NOT White Dwarf) for details. Remember – first come, first served!

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NEXT ISSUE

The Sunfire's Heart – the first episode of a two-part *AD&D* scenario, the winner of the *WD* mini-scenario competition. *Night's Dark Agents* – Ninjas and Ninjutsu in FRP. *The Last Log* – A *Call of Cthulhu* scenario, set in the future. *Plying the Spacelanes* – ship encounters in *Traveller* plus much more and all the regular features.

Don't forget Dragonmeet 28th July

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Still Going Strong...
SEWARS (bi-monthly) fanzine, 12 The Fryth, Basildon, Essex. Two different back issues for £1.00 incl p&p. Yearly subscriptions £4.00.

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HELP!

Is there life in Milton Keynes?
Are there any clubs or persons in the Bletchley or Milton Keynes area (16+) who could show me how to GM or play *RuneQuest*, as I have no experience at either. Contact: P Keary, 43 Frensham Drive, Bletchley, Milton Keynes. Tel: 642281.

Medieval Combat – Live!
The *Medieval Combat Society* requires more members – knights, ladies, squires, men-at-arms, longbowmen, etc, for their re-enactments of 14th century foot combat. Plus banquets! Wargamers, FRPers and historians equally welcome. Contact: Nick Gale, 10 Edgell Rd, Staines, Middx.

RQ in Merseyside
15-yr old *RuneQuest* player seeks club or players in local area. Willing to learn other FRP games. Write to: Robert Yates, 5 St James Drive, Bootle, Merseyside L20 4EL.

En Garde PBM
Competent players, enthusiastic beginners needed for postal *En Garde!* game. Established group of players, 4 week turnaround. Further details: SSAE to S R Wells, 4 Grange Close, Great Glenn, Leicester, or tel: Gt Glenn 2791.

Mercy!
17-yr old male *AD&D* player seeks group of players anywhere in the area of Birmingham of any sex, age, race, alignment or football team. Write to: Steve Allsop, 282 Witton Lodge Road, Perry Common, Birmingham B23 5LT.

Challenge!
Ogawa Yatsuburo, a great silver petal bushi of Iajima Province and son of O Yoshimura, scourge of the mongol fiends, desires revenge upon the miscreant inhabitants of the barbarian ronin's mansion.

Essex Player
Young player looking for club in my vicinity. Enjoys fantasy wargaming and all RPG. Experience in *D&D, T&T, RQ* and willing to learn. Contact Simon: Brentwood 212086.

Eastbourne, East Sussex
Wargames club. New members welcome for wargames in all periods from Ancient to Modern, *AD&D*, general boardgames. Club nights Mondays and Wednesdays, but clubrooms available throughout the week if required. Phone: 0323 59546 or 24416 for details.

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Penpal
AD&D Lendor the half-orc, or *SF* Marzii the Yazirian, requests a penpal. *AD&D* or *SF*. Please write to: Kevin Smith, Block 28, 12 Floor, Baguio Villas, Pok-Fu-Lam, Hong Kong.

Hell Hounds
Play-by-mail RPG club. Free membership. Features *AD&D, Call of Cthulhu, Traveller, RuneQuest* and even *Car Wars* games. Interested? Contact: *Hell Hounds*, 116 Shaggy Calf Lane, Slough, Berks SL2 5HQ.

Milford Haven
19-yr old wants to join club or form one with players of similar age in the Milford Haven area (or nearby). Plays *RQ, AD&D*. Contact: Mark Hughes, 71 Pill Road, Milford Haven, Dyfed.

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Comments: Limited members but all ages welcome.
Contact: Stephen Saunders on: Slough 20867.

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Games: RPGs; mostly *AD&D*, but will try others and wargames.
Time: Every Wednesday 7.30pm.
Place: Darleigh Hotel, 16 Clegg Ave, Cleveleys but please ring Kevin to confirm.
Comments: We are a new club, no experience necessary, all ages welcome.
Contact: Kevin Cropper on: (0253) 855511.

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Place: Members' houses.
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Time: Mainly Thursday evenings and some specials at weekends.
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Comments: Minimum age 18+
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Time: Fri, Sat and Sun evenings.
Place: Members' houses.
Comments: Ages 14-17 welcome.
Contact: Simon Miles, Northlands, Westwood Ave, Hornsea, E Yorks HU18 1EE. Tel: (04012) 2296.

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Morgdens Fantasy Club
Games: *AD&D/Basic D&D*.
Time: To be arranged.
Place: To be arranged.
Comments: New club; all welcome (novices and experienced players). Also good artist wanted for club magazine!
Contact: Morgden, 2 Sycamore Ave, Chepstow, Gwent NP6 5JU.

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The Berserkers
Games: *D&D, AD&D*, will try others.
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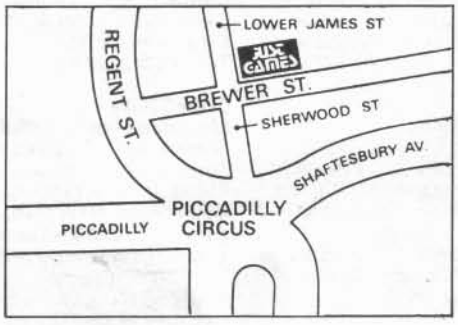

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301	With Heavy Bolt Rifle
302	Black Guard Trooper
303	Black Guard Officer
304	Officer
305	Senior Officer
306	With Grenade Launcher
307	With Conversion Beam Projector
308	With Rapid Fire Bolt Gun
309	In Power Armour (12p)
310	In Dreadnought Armour (15p)
311	Imperial Assault Droid (25p)
312	Trooper Crewman, standing
313	Trooper Crewman, sitting
314	In Power Armour + Support Bolter (12p)
315	In Power Armour + Plasma Gun (12p)
316	Imperial Combat Scout + Heavy Bolt Gun
317	Imperial Fast Scout Bike (35p)
318	Scout Bike only (30p)
319	Scout + Conversion Beam

REDEMPTIONIST REBELS

400	With Force Sword & Pistol
401	With Laser Rifle
402	Warrior Lord
403	With Flame Thrower
404	With Missile Launcher
405	With Auto-Laser
406	With Heavy Laser
407	Warrior Lord with Power Axe
408	Redemptionist Trike with 2-man crew (50p)
408A	Trike only (35p)
409	Trike Gunner only
410	Redemptionist Command Trike (50p)
411	Warrior Lord with Power Sword and Sun Gun
412	Redemptionist Crewman, standing
413	As above, but sitting
414	Seated Redemptionist Trooper
415	Redemptionist Scout Skimmer with 2-man crew (£1.00)
416	Redemptionist Scout Attack vehicle + 2-man crew (£1.15)

MERCENARIES

500	Officer with Pistol
501	With Assault Rifle
502	With Machine Gun
503	With S.M.G.
504	With Auto-Laser and Jet Pack
505	In Dreadnought Armour (20p)
506	In Power Armour (15p)

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(extra weaponry for all vehicles)

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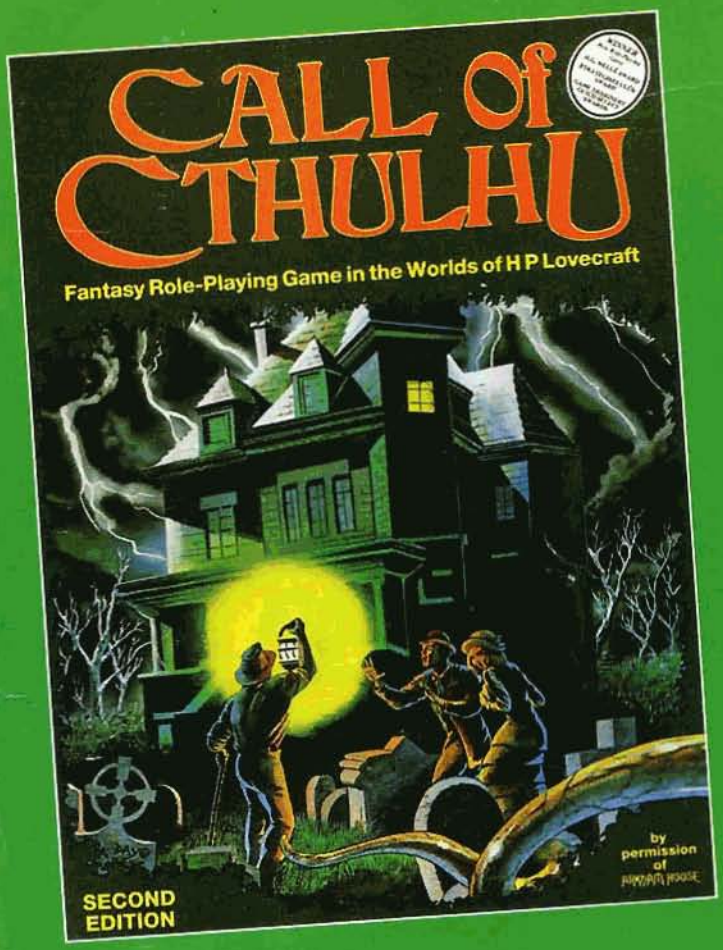

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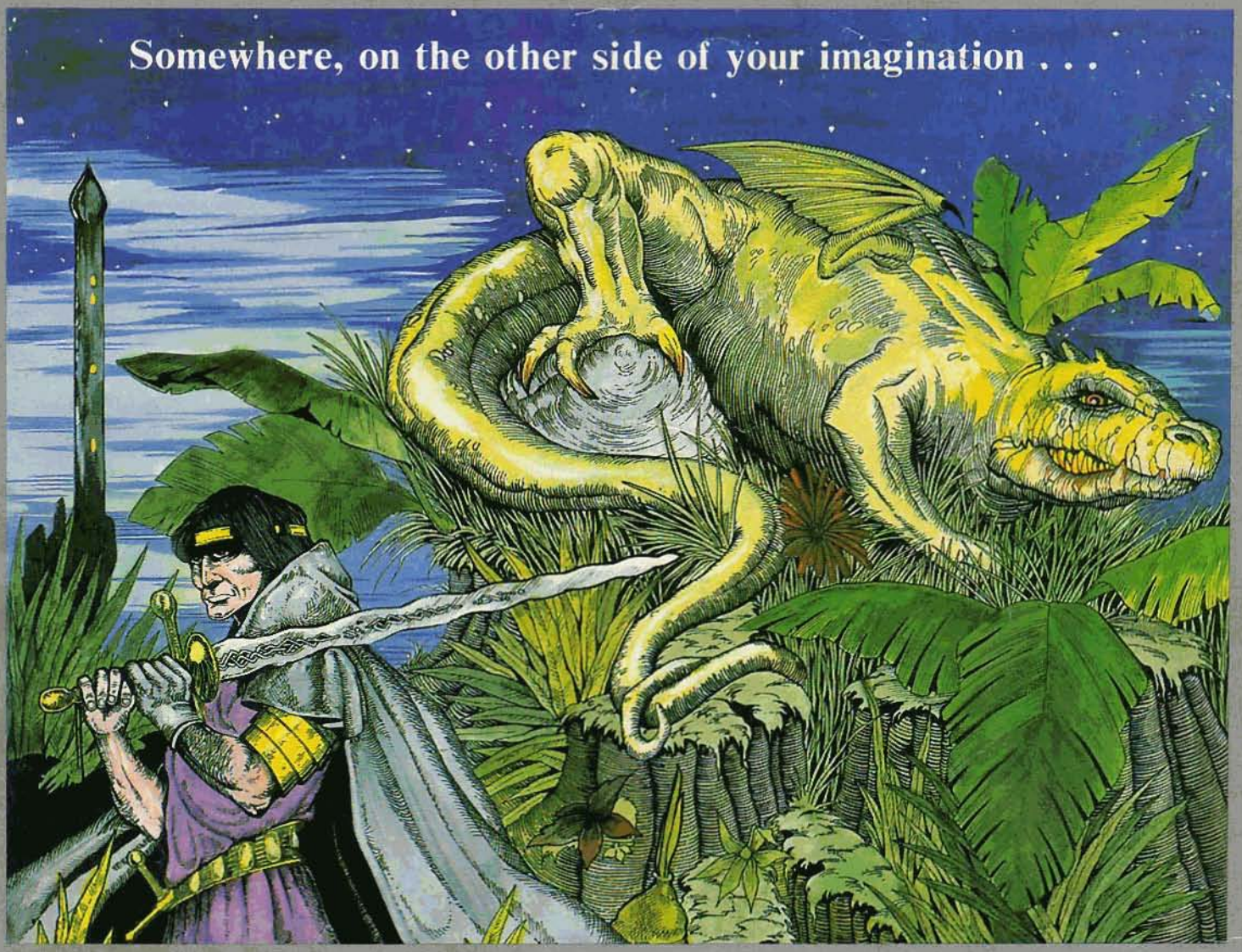

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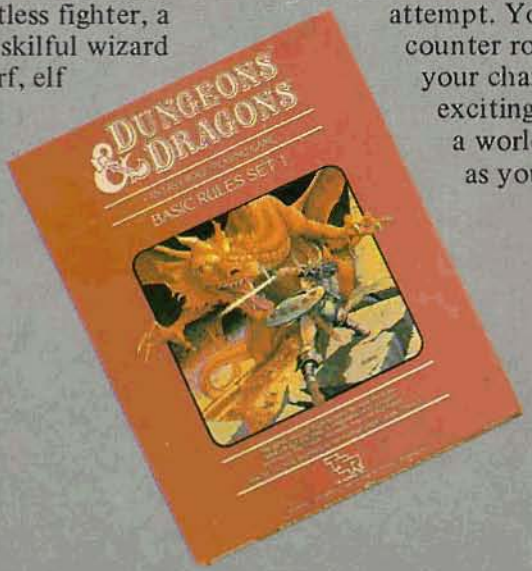

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